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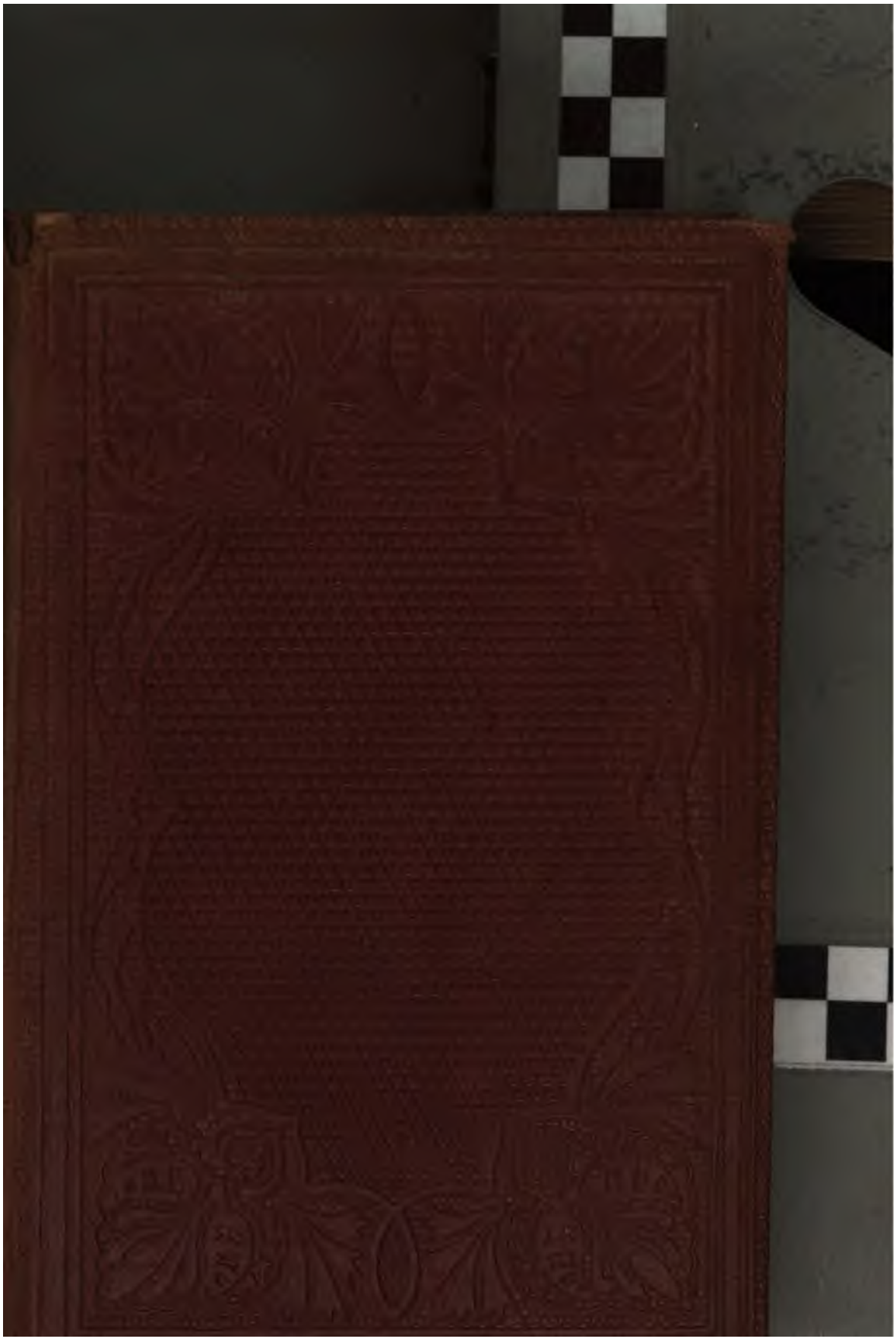
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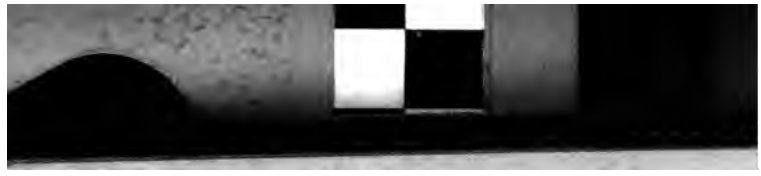

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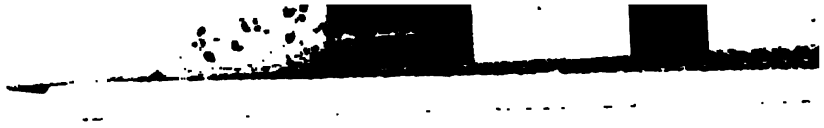
















Hugh L. Burns

Born April 5th 1822





THE

HISTORY

OF THE

PRIMITIVE METHODIST CONNEXION

FROM ITS ORIGIN

TO

THE CONFERENCE OF 1860,

THE

FIRST JUBILEE YEAR OF THE CONNEXION.

COMPILED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE BOOK COMMITTEE OF THE DENOMINATION, AND APPROVED BY THE CONFERENCE.

BY JOHN PETTY.

A New Edition, Revised and Enlarged.

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To the Ministers, Office-bearers, and Members

of

The Primitive Methodist Connexion

The following History is inscribed,

As a Faithful Record of

The Principal Events which have occurred during the First Half Century of the Denomination,

And as a Grateful Memorial of the Providence and Grace of God in behalf of the Community,

By their Fellow-labourer in the Gospel,

THE COMPILER.





PREFACE.

AN authentic History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion has long been regarded by many of its friends as a desideratum. A brief "History of the Primitive Methodists, giving an account of their Rise and Progress to the year 1823," was published by Mr. HUGH BOURNE, and extensively circulated. But that work has long been out of print; and as it only extended to the year above-named, a larger and more comprehensive History has for many years been demanded. The necessity of a more ample and extended record of the origin and progress of the Connexion was increasingly felt as the fiftieth year of its history approached. With the view of meeting this requirement, and of promoting the best interests of the denomination, the Author of the following History, at the recommendation of several influential brethren, was induced to commence preparation for it in the year 1856. The Conference of 1857 was pleased to appoint him to write the work, and considerately made provision for all necessary official documents being placed at his service. The journals and papers of the late Mr. HUGH BOURNE were also



purchased under Conferential direction, and entrusted to the care of the Author, to assist him in his undertaking.

These documents, journals, and papers, the brief History of the Connexion by Mr. H. BOURNE, the denominational Magazine from the commencement, the Journals and the Life of Mr. CLOWES, the Memoir of Mr. BATTY, and all other published works casting light upon the origin and progress of the community, have been carefully examined, and rendered tributary to the work. Many of the Author's ministerial brethren, and other esteemed friends, have also rendered valuable service by communications respecting the missionary labours in which they have been engaged, or of which they have been witnesses.

In some cases the materials placed at his command were so abundant as to cause him embarrassment in selecting the most valuable, and as to task his ability at condensation. To have made the work twice or thrice its present size would have been comparatively easy, and would, doubtless, have rendered it more acceptable to a few persons; but this would have materially impeded its circulation.

In a few cases, however, his materials have been scanty, and therefore the information he has furnished respecting the commencement and progress of the denomination in certain districts is not so ample as might

be desired. But he has furnished all which was in his power to obtain. Many important facts have irrecoverably perished through not being recorded in due time.

The Author judges it probable that a measure of disappointment and dissatisfaction may be felt by some persons on account of the labours of certain brethren being pretty fully recorded, whilst those of others, perhaps equally successful, are scarcely noticed, or it may be, not even mentioned. Two very good reasons may be assigned for this inequality. First, in most cases where omissions may be observed no information has been available to the Compiler. He has more than once advertised on the covers of the denominational Magazine for all requisite information; and if any, who had it in their power to communicate useful information, omitted, through modesty or otherwise, to furnish it, the Author is not blameable for recording little or nothing of their labours. He has been desirous of giving them due prominence, and has been prevented from it only through lack of sufficient information. He has not willingly passed over the labours of any brother, the record of which would have thrown additional light on the history of the denomination. He has anxiously endeavoured to do justice to all, rendering honour to whom honour is due; and has done his utmost to furnish information respecting the progress of the community in every district. Where he could not furnish all the information desirable, he has given



all that was obtainable. Secondly, in the latter part of the work several years are embraced at one view, and the successful labours of some brethren could not well be noticed, because the stations on which they laboured made little or no progress on the whole during the period under review, though they might greatly improve during the time that these brethren laboured thereon.

As to the general character of the work, the Author believes it may correctly be represented as *a sober and truthful record of facts.* He has spent no little time in carefully examining his materials and in balancing evidence, in order that he might give the substance truthfully and correctly. And it is some evidence of the accuracy of the facts he has detailed, that though they have all been examined by ten different committees, living in the several districts of the Connexion, not a single objection has been raised to any fact of any moment. The writer can conscientiously affirm that he has laboured to avoid all colouring or exaggeration, and to present the naked truth before his readers.

The work is neither controversial, laudatory, nor apologetic. The Author has anxiously guarded against feeding denominational pride and vanity, and has seldom adduced an argument directly in favour of the Connexion, or as an answer to an opponent. He has invariably felt an earnest desire to promote the spiritual good of his own community, by recording examples

worthy of imitation, and narrating evils and failures as an admonition to increased vigilance and caution; and has been wishful to furnish such information, and present such facts, as would enable intelligent readers of other denominations to form their own unbiassed judgment of the community whose history he has written.

He hopes he has not recorded any thing that will give just cause of offence to any section of evangelical Christians. The intollerance and persecuting spirit of many clergymen of the Church of England is noticed in several places, but never except when necessary to the fidelity of the narrative. Innumerably more examples of a similar kind could have been furnished had the writer felt any pleasure in recording them; but he can truly say that it has been far more agreeable to him to narrate the generosity and Christian kindness of other clergymen than to record examples of the foregoing class. He has felt bound to give a full account of the expulsion of Messrs. BOURNE and CLOWES from the Wesleyan community; but he hopes he has done it in a spirit of candour, and without transgressing the law of brotherly kindness and charity. Grateful mention of the kind assistance of Wesleyan ministers and friends, and of the catholicity of sentiment manifested by Independents, Baptists, and other religious denominations, will be found in many portions of this volume.

To enhance the value of the work as a book of re-



ference, a copious index has been prepared. This, it is hoped, with the ample headings of each chapter, will be of considerable service in enabling readers easily to find any particular which they may desire to examine.

Those readers who are not familiar with the ecclesiastical terms common among Methodists, nor acquainted with the constitution of Methodist societies, would do well to read the former part of the last chapter before the other portions of the volume.

It may not be improper to add a word about the style in which the work is written. The Writer has not studied ornament—he makes no pretention to polish; he has aimed at simplicity, perspicuity, and sobriety, and hopes he has not greatly failed in this respect. More vigour and animation in some places would, doubtless, have been an improvement; but delicate health, the pressure of numerous duties, and the character of his materials in some instances, have rendered vigorous and animated writing next to impossible. The bulk of the volume bears but a small proportion to the amount of labour spent upon it, but the labour has consisted more in collecting, examining, sifting, and arranging his materials, than in the composition.

Whatever imperfections may be found in the work, the Author humbly hopes that it will be of some

service to the cause of evangelical truth and Scriptural piety; and he prayerfully commits it to the candour of the reader, and to the blessing of Almighty God.

THE AUTHOR.

Hull, November 28th, 1859.



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first edition of this work, comprising 3000 copies, being partly designed to assist in the commemoration of the Jubilee of the Connexion, extended only to the Conference of 1859. The Conference of 1860 directed the compiler to add another year to the history, so as to include fifty years complete. He at once attended to the direction, and as early as was compatible with his other duties completed his task. But the report of a new and enlarged edition to be speedily issued being widely circulated, greatly retarded the sale of the former one, as numerous friends naturally wished to have a copy of the complete history, and therefore deferred for a considerable time the purchase of one of the first edition. This has delayed the publication of the new and improved edition, as it would have involved considerable pecuniary loss to issue a second edition while any considerable number remained of the former. The delay has, however, afforded the Compiler a better opportunity of more carefully revising and of considerably improving the work. Many of the extracts from Preachers' Journals, which in the

first edition he deemed it best to insert for the sake of authenticity, have in this edition been incorporated in the regular style of the narrative, and condensed into much less space, thereby contributing to the literary improvement of the work. But reverence for the character of Messrs. BOURNE and CLOWES, as the chief founders of the Connexion, has restrained him from taking the same liberty with their compositions, deeming it best to allow them generally to make their respective statements in their own style.

The unusually long headings to the chapters, useful in the circumstances under which the sheets of the first edition were issued, have in this edition been greatly abridged, most needful particulars being inserted in the very copious index prepared after the issue of the work in sheets, which index has been somewhat enlarged in the present edition.

One or two unimportant facts have, for certain reasons, been omitted in this edition, and one or two unimportant statements have been slightly modified; but no material change will be found in the statement of the facts generally. Besides the history of the fiftieth year of the denomination contained in this edition, which is not in the former one, additional information is given in several places, rendering greater completeness to the whole.

This edition is printed on very superior paper to

that of the former, and the typography is equally superior, both in accuracy and beauty, and will, it is hoped, give great satisfaction to the purchasers.

May the Divine blessing attend its perusal, and render it a means of instruction and profit to all who shall read it.

NOTE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THIS edition is published in a cheaper form chiefly to meet the wants of many members of the community who have not much money to expend on books, and yet are wishful to possess a copy of the history of the denomination to which they belong. In other respects it is exactly the same as the Library Edition, being printed from the same type and at the same time with it.

Jubilee School, York,
December 31st, 1864.

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THE HISTORY

OF THE

PRIMITIVE METHODIST CONNEXION.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory Observations.—An Account of Messrs. Bourne and Clowes.

"THE kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Such is the beautiful and expressive imagery by which the Divine Author of Christianity indicates the feeble origin, gradual progress, and ultimate extension of His religion in the world. Ecclesiastical history both illustrates and justifies the correctness of this representation. Small and feeble was Christianity at the beginning; and, according to outward appearances, nothing was more unlikely than that it would gain a permanent establishment, much less extend itself into all parts of the earth. Few of the rich, the learned, and the great gave it their patronage; the vast majority regarded it with scorn,



and not unfrequently opposed it with bitter hatred. The "common people heard the Saviour gladly," and during his lifetime a few hundreds of them became his sincere and devoted followers. But being without the influence of rank, the advantages of learning, and the help of extraordinary talents, they could render but little aid towards the establishment of a new religion. Even the apostles of Christ, his confidential friends, and his chief messengers to the nations, were men of humble rank and obscure origin. They were not selected from the nobles of the land, nor from the learned classes, but from the fishermen of Galilee and from tax-gatherers: men of common sense and of sound understandings, but "unlearned and ignorant," or home-bred, possessing no extraordinary talents, and retaining much of their rough Galilean dialect and rusticity of manners.

Yet unpromising, as to its outward aspect, as was Christianity at its commencement, and virulent and powerful as was the opposition it had to encounter, it nevertheless triumphed over all, and, despite of Jewish unbelief and gentile superstitions, spread its heavenly doctrines with wondrous rapidity, and shed its benign and soul-transforming influence upon multitudes of the most degraded and wretched among men, awakening their dormant mental energies, raising them in the scale of society, fitting them for the efficient discharge of all social and religious duties, and elevating them to the dignity of sons of God and heirs of heaven.

And though Christianity has frequently been shorn of its strength to a mournful degree, and seriously hindred in its progress, it yet retains its footing in the earth; and while other religions are losing their hold upon the nations, and hastening to decay, it is exhibiting new life, putting forth increased energies, gaining new conquests, and bids fair to fill the world, in due time, with the light and purity of its Divine doctrines, and regenerate "all nations, and kindreds, and peoples," by its superhuman power. Such has been its progress, that it has become a tree whose fertile branches are extended into all quarters of the globe, and beneath whose blessed shade all nations will ultimately seek

repose. May the period be hastened when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ," and "all shall know him from the least to the greatest."

In a more limited sense than that at which we have just hinted, the representation of the Saviour, in the beautiful parable above quoted, has received illustration in the origin and progress of various sections of the church of Christ, which have been raised up in the order of Providence in different ages and countries, for the revival and extension of pure Christianity.

Both our limits and design forbid enlargement upon this point, otherwise instructive and interesting details might be given respecting the Paulicians, the Waldenses, the Wicklffites, the German Reformers, the Moravian Brethren, the great Methodist bodies in England and America, and other evangelical and useful denominations of Christians. We must proceed at once to the history of the community whose origin and progress we have undertaken to narrate, and which we humbly think will afford another illustration of the parable already quoted. In creation, providence, and grace, great things are often seen springing from small beginnings. Seldom has such a combination been more strikingly displayed than in the commencement and progress of the Primitive Methodist Connexion. That the reader may learn how humble was the origin, how feeble the commencement of this now prosperous section of the Christian church, may clearly perceive the character of the work carried on thereby, and gratefully recognise therein the Divine hand, it may be of service first to furnish a brief account of the principal persons who were honoured by God in its formation and early extension.

First in the order of time was the late Mr. Hugh Bourne. His paternal ancestors were of Norman extraction, and came over to England with William the Conqueror, or during his reign, and settled in the north of Staffordshire, in the possession of a considerable estate. The immediate progenitors of Hugh Bourne were, however, of more humble rank in life. His father, Mr. Joseph Bourne, was a small farmer, a wheelwright, and a timber



dealer. He was a man of a violent temper, and of somewhat dissolute habits, but withal a zealous Churchman. Ellen Bourne, the mother of Hugh, was an estimable woman, who feared God, and served him according to the light she possessed.

Hugh Bourne was the third son and fifth child of his parents, and was born at Fordhays, in the parish of Stoke-upon-Trent, Staffordshire, April 3rd, 1772. His mind was early impressed with the importance of religious truth; being, like many other great and good men, indebted, under God, for this benefit to the teaching, example, and prayers of his excellent mother. She taught him according to her ability the existence and character of God, and the necessity of prayer, industry, and sobriety, together with other branches of practical piety.

The following extract will excite the sympathy of the Christian reader, and partly account for the earnestness with which Mr. Bourne afterwards preached, and otherwise enforced the doctrine of a present salvation:—"About my sixth or seventh year, I was deeply convinced of sin; and for a period of above twenty years afterwards, I seldom went to bed without a dread of being in hell before morning; and in the morning I had a dread of being in hell before night. Still, as I grew up I was regarded as being a moral man, and some persons thought me a righteous man. But 'the heart knoweth its own bitterness;' and I think during these twenty sorrowful years no man could have induced me to believe that there was any sorrow like my sorrow." His God-fearing mother had not then a knowledge of salvation by faith in Christ, nor had he yet enjoyed the privilege of hearing the Gospel clearly preached. No evangelical clergyman was then to be found in the neighbourhood of his residence, and Methodists and other Dissenters he had not heard. Afterwards he pathetically exclaims, "Oh! that I had had some one to take me by the hand and instruct me in the mystery of faith and the nature of a free, full, and present salvation! How happy would it have been for me! But I looked, and there was no eye to pity; I mourned, but there was no hand to help!" At length, however, light and deliverance came. A

friend at Burslem lent his mother a book, containing several treatises and sermons, among which was a sermon on the Trinity, by Mr. Wesley, the reading of which was the means of enlightening his mind as to the nature of true religion; and some time afterwards the reading of Fletcher's "Letters on the Spiritual Manifestation of the Son of God," gave him additional light, and led him to the exercise of faith in Christ, when his sins and sorrows were instantly removed, and he was filled with peace and joy. Love to God and all mankind overflowed his soul, and he had such a foretaste of heaven as he had not previously believed to be possible for anyone to enjoy in this world. This important event occurred in his father's house at Bemersley, in the parish of Norton-in-the-Moors (whither the family had removed), in the spring of 1799, he being then about twenty-seven years of age. At the midsummer following he united with the Methodist society at Ridgway, in the neighbourhood of Bemersley, three or four miles from Tunstall. His excellent mother connected herself with the society soon afterwards, and towards the close of the year his brother James was brought to God, and became a member of the same church. He subsequently occupied a conspicuous place in the Primitive Methodist Connexion; and though engaged in secular business, yet laboured extensively to promote the prosperity of the cause, and for many years took an active share in its management.

Next, in the order of time, we shall introduce the late excellent William Clowes. He was born at Burslem, Staffordshire, March 12th, 1780. His father, Samuel Clowes, like the father of Mr. Hugh Bourne, was a man of dissipated habits, but was brought to God in his last affliction. Ann Clowes, the mother of William, was the daughter of Mr. Aaron Wedgwood, a man of talent and enterprise, and was one of the first manufacturers, at Longton, who produced china-ware or porcelain. She was naturally amiable, had a strong mind, and, like the mother of the Bournes, was educated in the doctrines and ceremonies of the Church of England, and was of unblemished morals; but, like Mrs. Ellen



Bourne, was not acquainted with the doctrine of justification by faith, till instructed therein by her son, when she trusted in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and found peace with God.

Her son William gave early indications of superior physical and mental powers. At the premature age of ten years he was apprenticed to his uncle, Mr. Joseph Wedgwood, of Burslem, to learn a branch of the pottery manufacture. About the same time he was convinced of sin, especially of disobedience to his parents, through attending some prayer-meetings held for children, by a pious woman named Nancy Wood; and some time afterwards, in a revival of religion at Burslem, he was brought to feel the depravity of his nature, and the need of pardoning mercy. It is thought that had a pious friend then given him suitable instruction and encouragement, he would have sought and found the inestimable blessing of early piety. Unhappily, no pious friend performed this duty; and not improving the visitation of mercy, his good impressions vanished like the morning cloud and the early dew. He grew up in sin, was excessively fond of amusements, greatly delighted in drinking and dancing, and was frequently engaged in the diabolical practices of gambling and fighting. When about twenty years of age, his apprenticeship being ended, he entered upon a wider career of folly, and his recklessness was seldom equalled. Having been informed of a new pottery establishment at Hull, in Yorkshire, he went thither, and obtained employment. Being an excellent workman, he could sometimes earn twenty shillings a day; but such was his prodigality that he involved himself in debt and embarrassment. His vicious practices also endangered his civil liberty. War was then raging against France—marines were wanted to assist in it—and on one occasion he had a narrow escape from being impressed, and forcibly sent on board a man-of-war, then lying in the Humber. He had been embroiled in a quarrel at a public-house, and no sooner had the struggle ended, than the combatants were seized by the press-gang, despite his efforts to escape; and it was only through the intercession of his employer and that of the

landlord of the public-house, that he was liberated. Mr. Clowes then hastened back to Staffordshire, and, soon after, made some sincere, though at first unsuccessful, efforts to reform his conduct. He had previously entered into the marriage state, partly with a view of breaking off from his vicious companions, and leading a better life; and he now attempted to abandon the practice of excessive drinking, limiting himself to half-a-pint of beer a-day. He was still, however, ignorant of the way of salvation by faith in Christ. But, happily, he was invited to a preaching service at Burslem, one evening, which was followed by a lovefeast, wherein he felt the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, and he solemnly resolved to yield himself unreservedly to God; and, after returning home, wisely unbosomed his feelings to his wife. The following morning, January 20th, 1805, he attended a prayer meeting in a private house at Tunstall; and there he ventured to cast the burden of his sins at the foot of the cross, and obtained instant relief. The meeting was a noisy one; but it does not appear that Mr. Clowes joined in the noise. He says, "In an agony of wrestling prayer, I believed God *would* save me—then I believed he *was saving* me—then I believed he *had* saved me—and it was so. I did not praise God aloud at the moment of my deliverance; but I was fully persuaded that I was pardoned, and I had peace with God through Jesus Christ. Accordingly, when the meeting was ended, and some one asked me how I was going on, I instantly replied, 'God has pardoned all my sins.' The people then fell upon their knees, and returned thanks to God for my great deliverance." So calm, however, did he appear, and so quiet was he, that a person present on the occasion told us that several doubted the reality of his conversion. But the fruits soon proved the genuine character of the work then wrought in him. The reformation of his life was complete. He became sober, industrious, and upright in his dealings, and faithfully discharged all the debts he had previously contracted for drink at public-houses, as well as those he had contracted e sewhere. The change was great and striking, and apparent to all. Having had much



forgiven, he loved much in return; and his religious zeal and diligence were extraordinary. He at once united with the Methodist society at Tunstall, meeting in class with Mr. James Steel, who afterwards became a pillar in the Primitive Methodist society in that locality. The useful and illustrious course which Mr. Clowes now began we shall see continued, without interruption, through the remainder of his life, and shall, in due time, observe the prominent part he took in the early movements of the connexion, and his successful efforts to promote its prosperity and extension.

CHAPTER II.

Work of God at Harriseahead.—Formation of a Society.—Chapel built.—Day's Praying upon Mow.—Camp Meeting contemplated.—L. Dow's Visit.—First Camp Meeting held.—Description of it by Messrs. Bourne and Clowes.

WE have previously narrated the conversion of Mr. Hugh Bourne, and his union with the Methodist society. We must now proceed to detail his religious progress, and the commencement of his eminent usefulness. He did not soon begin to exercise his gifts in public; his natural timidity, increased by the peculiar circumstances of his childhood and youth, operating injuriously, and preventing him for some time from taking any prominent part in religious exercises. He says, "I never prayed in public for a year and a half, or more, after I joined the society. I was pressed upon to do it at the Burslem Sunday night prayer-meetings; but at the instant I thought to try, the power of utterance seemed entirely to leave me." But during this time he wisely sought a better acquaintance with Scriptural theology, and made religious subjects the themes of his earnest and prayerful study. Before his conversion he had diligently laboured to acquire a knowledge of various useful sciences, but from the period of his second birth, and his union with the Methodists, he chiefly studied the important and glorious science of theology. "From this time," he says "my reading and studies were turned much (though not wholly) from arts, sciences, and general learning, and fixed more fully than before on the doctrines of Divine truth, and on the reading and study of Christian experience." An opening

at length occurred for the exercise of his gifts in a very profitable manner. He had entered into business for himself; and early in the year 1800, he purchased a quantity of oak timber at Dale's Green, between Harriseahead and Mow Cop, which circumstance brought him much into that neighbourhood; and about the same time he was prevailed upon to undertake the wood-work at the Stonetrough colliery in the same locality. The vicinity is thus described by himself:—"Mow Cop, anciently written Mole Cope, is a great, rough, craggy mountain, the highest land in this part of England, as is shown by the canals and other waters. It runs nearly north and south, ranging between Staffordshire and Cheshire, and is in both counties. The southern end is nearly two miles from the Kidsgrove colliery, in Staffordshire, and the northern end is about three miles from the town of Congleton, in Cheshire. It is about three miles north-west from Bemersley. Harriseahead is about half-a-mile east of Mow Cop. [About four miles from Tunstall and Burslem.] The land is mostly poor, barren, and unproductive, causing the face of the country to have an unpleasant appearance." In this rough locality, the inhabitants of which were mostly uncultivated in their manners, and unlovely in their moral character, Mr. Bourne found a suitable sphere for the useful exercises of his gifts and graces. He looked around him with a heavy heart, and sighed over the godless state of the people; and as he saw no means of improving it, it became a serious question with him, whether he could long remain here and maintain his religious character. He was however, not only enabled to retain his piety, but was also the means under God of bringing a considerable portion of the territory under Scriptural cultivation. At Harriseahead, there lived a relative of Mr. Bourne, Daniel Shubotham, a man of some talent and energy, but ungodly and profane; "a boxer, a poacher, and a leading character in crime." His father had left him considerable property, but through his prodigality he had squandered most of it, and though he still lived on his small freehold, he worked in the mines as a regular collier. Happily he was induced to enter into conversation

with Mr. Bourne on religious subjects. On the 24th of December, 1800, he and another collier came to Mr. Bourne for pious converse, and an arrangement was made for Mr. B. to visit Daniel at his own house next morning. Mr. Bourne spent the intervening night in great sorrow and travail of soul; and the next morning he felt it a cross to go to the house of his relative. He, however, fulfilled his engagement; and it is supposed that, through lack of confidence in his own conversational powers, he took with him a book written by a member of the Society of Friends, and a written account of his own conversion. After the conversation was over, Mr. Bourne left the house without prayer, not yet having courage to engage in prayer in the presence of others. Daniel accompanied him part of the way on his return, and Mr. Bourne explained to him some important passages of Scripture, and urged him to flee from the wrath to come. Daniel became decided, and soon after found peace through faith in Christ. About the same time another collier, Matthias Bailey, was brought to God through hearing a sermon in the open air at Newchapel, a village in the same vicinity; and between him, and his neighbour Daniel, and Mr. Bourne, a strong religious friendship was formed. They were zealous for the Lord of Hosts, conversed with their fellow-workmen and others on the things of God, and established prayer-meetings in the neighbourhood. A great revival of religion took place; a number of sinners turned to God in penitence and faith, and a striking reformation was witnessed in the locality. On week-day evenings prayer-meetings were prudently limited to a reasonable time, that they might not interfere with other duties; and as new converts increased, and persons desirous of engaging in prayer multiplied, opportunities for all to exercise their gifts herein frequently failed, which often led to complaints about the meetings being concluded too soon. On one of these occasions, Daniel Shubotham, with his characteristic warmth, said, "You shall have a meeting upon Mow some Sunday, and have a whole day's praying, and then you'll be satisfied." The idea thus originated was not immediately carried

out; but it was not entirely forgotten, and we shall soon see circumstances arise through which the project was *substantially* accomplished.

In the meanwhile the work of God continued to prosper, more or less, and it spread to Kidsgrove as well as to the Cheshire side of Mow; and a necessity was now laid upon Mr. Bourne to exercise his gifts in a still more conspicuous manner. He had often been requested to lead the class at Ridgway, where he was a member, but through timidity had declined;—but as there was no one to look after the new converts at Kidsgrove, he went thither a few Sunday mornings to speak to them, and here made his first attempt at class-leading. He was shortly after urged to begin to preach, his friends probably judging that his general information and his knowledge of Divine things qualified him for the acceptable and useful discharge of pulpit duties. There was also a lack of preaching services at Harriseahead and the neighbourhood. Preaching had been for some years established at the house of Joseph Pointon, on the Cheshire side of Mow, about a mile and a

great open-air meetings in which Mr. Bourne afterwards took a zealous and active part. But though he had made this useful attempt at preaching, he never received the sanction of the regular authorities of Burslem circuit. He, however, continued to preach wherever Divine Providence seemed to open the way, and Newchapel, Bradley Green, Brown Edge, and Norton, soon shared in his zealous efforts. During this year, too, a chapel was built at Harriseahead, capable of seating two hundred persons, chiefly through his exertions. The chapel was regularly supplied with preaching by the Burslem circuit, and the society duly recognised.

Mr. Bourne, however, was of opinion that too much preaching was appointed, which he believed operated injuriously, preventing the people's gifts from being sufficiently exercised in prayer-meetings. Those who had been brought to the Lord remained steadfast, but for a long time no new converts were added to their number, which was a cause of great grief to his mind. But a revival of religion took place among them towards the close of the year 1804, by which he was greatly cheered and strengthened. It was brought about in the following manner:—a person named Clarke, residing at Congleton, had solicited some Methodists from the neighbourhood of Stockport, who were famed as revivalists, to attend a lovefeast in Congleton chapel. Mr. Bourne and others were invited to meet them, and acceded to the invitation. Mr. Bourne says, "I was greatly blest at the lovefeast. I sat in the gallery. Two men, revivalists, sat in the pew before me. One leaned back, and asked whether the Lord had cleansed my heart? I said, 'I do not know, but he is blessing me.' He said, 'You may have a clean heart to-night. Pray to God to shew you your heart.' But I did not understand him. In the lovefeast they spoke very pointedly of full sanctification. After the lovefeast we went into the house to have a meeting with the Stockport men. I was surprised at their earnestness, zeal, and faith. They urged a full and present salvation, and then prayed for some of our people, who obtained the blessing. One came and prayed for

me—another talked to me, and I felt power come. They asked me if the Lord had washed my heart. I said he was blessing me."

The next night he attended the class-meeting at Harriseahead, when the Spirit of God was poured out in an unusual manner. Mr. Bourne says, "I was humbled down, and shown the manner in which the Stockport men worshipped. I came by simple faith, and obtained the blessing; and after the meeting was concluded, the power of God came upon us in such a degree that we began again and again, and for some time could scarcely stand or speak, so great was the power of God upon us." The reception of the blessing of entire sanctification by several of the members was followed by the conversion of sinners, and a considerable extension of the work of God. A revival soon after broke out at Tunstall and Burslem, and at the former place James Nixon and Thomas Woodworth, (of whom we shall have to speak more particularly hereafter), among others were brought to God. William Clowes, as we have seen, was also converted about the same time, having found peace at a prayer-meeting, January 20th, 1805. On the following Sabbath he attended a lovefeast, at Harriseahead, which, he says, "was rendered memorable to me, not only on account of a glorious deliverance from darkness and temptation, but also on account of my acquaintance with Daniel Shubotham beginning then." An intimate acquaintance was soon afterwards formed between him and Mr. H. Bourne, who was evidently attracted towards him by his extraordinary faith and devotion. Under date of March 27th, of the same year, we find the following entry in the journal of the latter: "They are getting lively at Burslem. I came back with William Clowes. He is invited to meetings about Burslem. He is got very solid. He said that last Saturday night, when he reached home, he prayed to the Lord to seal him, and the weighty power of God came upon him, and it made him more steady in spirit. Such a man for faith I scarcely ever saw; he gains any blessing almost immediately. He grows up into God and our Lord Jesus Christ at a very great rate." The next week we find the following entry: "He [W. Clowes]

says, that in his work, and everything, he gives up all to God, and he has full and perfect patience, and submission to the will of God in all things. And when he speaks a word which seems to be out of place, or neglects anything, he immediately goes to God, and if he only says, Lord help me! he feels the power of God as soon as he has spoken. This man is such an example of living by faith as I scarcely ever met with, and which I am not at present able to follow."

Again: Saturday, April 20th,—"I was at Tunstall. William Clowes has become a labourer, and the Lord owns his work. He is one raised up immediately by God,—a man of uncommonly deep experience, of unusual growth in grace, deep humility, steady zeal, and flaming love. Such a man I scarcely ever met with. O God, that thou wouldst make me like him! I desire it from my heart; grant it to me, O my Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, that I may be conformed to my Saviour's image, and grow up into Him. It seems as if the Lord has raised him up to assist in keeping the revival steady." What a blessed preparation for extensive usefulness did both these distinguished men receive! How manifest the grace of God in qualifying them for the extraordinary work to which His Providence was now about to call them, and in which they were successfully engaged for many years!

The revival at Harriseahead was by some means injured early in the year 1806, and more than twelve months elapsed without a single conversion taking place. This was a cause of grief to many, and a desire for a day's praying upon Mow was revived, in the hope that it would be a means of quickening the society, and of the conversion of sinners. This desire was strengthened by the stirring accounts of American Camp-meetings which had for several years appeared in the Methodist Magazines, which Mr. Hugh Bourne and others had read with intense interest. These extraordinary meetings appear to have arisen about the beginning of the present century, and to have derived their name from the fact that the people who attended them encamped in fields or woods during their continuance. The fullest description of one

which we have seen, is by the Rev. Joshua Marsden, Wesleyan Minister, in his "Narrative of a Mission to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick," &c. The extract from this work, given by Mr. Hugh Bourne, in his History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, may here be inserted, as it will cast some light upon the movements we are now about to narrate. Mr. Marsden says, "During my continuance in this city, [New York,] I had an opportunity of attending several Camp-meetings; and as the nature of these stupendous means of grace is not distinctly known, I will spend a few moments in making my readers acquainted with them.

"The tents are generally pitched in the form of a crescent, in the centre of which is an elevated stand for the preachers, round which, in all directions, are placed rows of planks for the people to sit upon while they hear the Word. Among the trees, which spread their tops over this forest-church, are hung the lamps, which burn all night, and give light to the various exercises of religion, which occupy the solemn midnight hours. It was nearly eleven o'clock at night when I first arrived on the border of the camp. I left the boat at the edge of the wood, one mile from the scene; and when I opened upon the camp-ground, my curiosity was converted into astonishment, to behold the pendant lamps among the trees; the tents half encircling a large space; four thousand people in the centre of this, listening with profound attention to a preacher, whose stentorian voice and animated manner carried the vibration of each word to a great distance through the deeply umbrageous wood, where, save the twinkling lamps of the camp, brooding darkness spread a tenfold gloom. All excited my astonishment, and forcibly brought before my view the Hebrews in the wilderness. The meetings generally begin on Monday morning, and on the Friday morning following break up. The daily exercises are carried forward in the following manner in the morning, at five o'clock, the horn sounds through the camp, either for preaching or prayer; this, with similar exercises, or a little intermission, brings on the breakfast hour, eight o'clock;



at ten, the horn sounds for public preaching, after which, until noon, the interval is filled up with little groups of praying persons, who scatter themselves up and down the camp, both in the tents and under the trees. These smaller exercises are productive of much good; a powerful spirit of prayer and exhortation is often called forth, and I have frequently seen three or four persons lying on the ground crying for mercy, or motionless, without any apparent signs of life, except pulsation. After dinner, the horn sounds at two o'clock; this is for preaching. I should have observed, that a female or two is generally left in each tent, to prepare materials for dinner, which is always cold meats, pies, tarts, tea, &c., the use of ardent spirits being forbidden. And a fire is kept burning in different parts of the camp, where the water is boiled. After the afternoon preaching, things take nearly the same course as in the morning, only the praying groups are upon a larger scale, and more scope is given to animated exhortations and loud prayers. Some who exercise on these occasions soon lose their voices, and, at the end of a camp-meeting, many of both preachers and people can only speak in a whisper. At six o'clock in the evening, the horn summons to preaching, after which, though in no regulated form, all the above means continue until morning; so that go to whatever part of the camp you please, some persons are engaged in them: yea, and during whatever part of the night you awake, the wilderness is vocal with praise.

"At this camp-meeting, perhaps not less than one hundred persons were awakened and converted to God. I have heard many say, that they never heard such praying, exhorting, and preaching anywhere else; and those who engage feel such a Divine afflatus, that they are carried along as by the force of a delightful torrent. Indeed, this has been so much the case with myself, the several times that I preached and exhorted at these meetings, that I was sensible of nothing but a constraining influence transporting me beyond myself, carrying me along with a freedom and fulness both of emotion and language, quite unusual. And yet I had no very friendly views of camp-meetings



until I attended them. However, I am now satisfied that they are the right hand of Methodism in the United States, and one main cause why the societies have doubled and trebled there within a few years."

Graphic descriptions like this of the exciting scenes frequent in American camp-meetings, kindled, as they were greatly calculated to do, in the ardent minds of Mr. H. Bourne and his zealous friends, earnest desires for similar meetings in England; and the arrival of Mr. Lorenzo Dow, an American preacher of considerable power and success, contributed to inflame these desires and to produce the determination to hold a camp-meeting in this country. Mr. Dow was very successful in preaching at Macclesfield, Congleton, and other places, and spoke largely in praise of the camp-meetings in America. Mr. Clowes heard him at Burslem, about the beginning of April, 1807, and was so impressed with his preaching and conversation, that he walked nine miles next morning to Congleton to hear him preach again, and arrived in time for the first service, which began at five o'clock, and also remained at the latter, which commenced at nine. Mr. H. Bourne heard him at Harriseahead, on the previous day, where he stated that occasionally something of a pentecostal shower attended camp-meetings, and that for a considerable time as much good had been done at them in America as at all other meetings put together. The next morning, Messrs. H. and J. Bourne heard him preach his farewell sermon at Congleton, being about to return to America; and Mr. H. Bourne purchased of him two pamphlets, one describing how camp-meetings were held, and the other being "A Defence of Camp-Meetings. By the Rev. S. K. Jennings, A.M." The reading of these pamphlets caused Mr. Bourne to determine to hold a camp-meeting at Norton, to counteract the evils of the wake, or annual parish feast. "In the village of Norton," he says, "we had yearly suffered loss by the wake, or parish revel, held about the 23rd of August. This had given me much concern, and it came into my mind, that if we could hold a camp-meeting for about three days, it would engage our young



members, and preserve them from being seduced by the vanities of the wake." The next Monday evening he went to the class-meeting at Harriseahead chapel, with a view to engage some of the members to assist at the contemplated meeting. On his arrival, he heard with pleasure that some of them had talked of having a camp-meeting; and when at the close of the class-meeting he named his intention to hold a camp-meeting at Norton, his friends readily promised to assist. Eager to enjoy the privilege of attending a meeting of the kind which had been productive of such good in America, and which they hoped would be equally successful in their neighbourhood, they also resolved to have one upon Mow as early as possible. Having preaching appointed in the chapel both morning and afternoon every Sunday, and unwilling to incommode the appointed preacher, they examined the preachers' plan for a suitable day. It was found that Thomas Cotton, one of themselves, then present, and an advocate for camp-meetings, was appointed on the 31st of May, and it was instantly agreed that a camp-meeting should be held on that day; and they all at once knelt down and joined in earnest prayer for the blessing of God to attend it and that at Norton, and crown them both with success. The propriety of publishing the camp-meeting to be held at Mow was next discussed. It was known that many of their friends at Tunstall and Burslem were opposed to open-air worship, and as the meeting was intended only for themselves, some of them thought it would be best to keep it as secret as possible. This, however, was overruled. Thomas Cotton wished to inform his friends in Congleton circuit, and Mr. Bourne wrote him some notes for the purpose; and "the report flew through the country as if it had gone on the wings of angels." In the meantime, "prayer and supplication were made unto the Lord without ceasing" to give his blessing with the meeting. The holding of the meeting was, however, understood to be conditional; if the weather proved fine a camp-meeting was to be held, and to begin at six o'clock in the morning; if rainy, one was not to be expected. And as much rain fell very early in the morning of the day ap-

pointed, Mr. Bourne and most of the Harriseahead friend concluded that there would be no camp-meeting on that day, an therefore were not on the camp-ground till some time after th meeting was appointed to begin. But many people came earl from distant places, and began the meeting at the appointed hou Mr. Clowes had prudently gone to the house of his friend, Danie Shubotham, on the previous night, in order to be ready for th beginning of the meeting, and at the time appointed he repaire to the place, and at once took part in the exercises. The meetin was held on the Cheshire side of Mow, in a field belonging to J Pointon. An account of it was afterwards published by Mr. Hug Bourne, from which we extract the following, slightly condensin some of his sentences:—

"Mow camp-meeting was held on Sunday, May 31st, 1807 The morning proved unfavorable; but about six o'clock the Lor sent the clouds off, and gave us a very pleasant day.

"The meeting was opened by two holy men from Knutsford Captain Anderson having previously erected a flag on the mountai to direct strangers; and these three, with some pious people fro Macclesfield, carried on the meeting a considerable time in a mos vigorous and lively manner. The congregation rapidly increased and others began to join in the holy exercises. The wind wa cold, but a large grove of fir trees kept it off; and another preach ing stand was erected in a distant part of the field, under cover o a stone wall. Returning [from the second stand] I met [with] company at a distance from the first stand, praying with a man i distress. I could not get near; but I there found such a degre of joy and love, that it was beyond description. I should gladl have stopped there, but other matters called me away. I perceive that the Lord was beginning to work mightily. Nearer the firs stand was another company, praying with mourners. Immediatel the man in the former company was praising God, and I foun that he had obtained the pardon of his sins. Many were after wards converted in the other company. Meantime preachin went on without intermission at both stands, and about noon th



congregation was so much increased that we were obliged to erect a third preaching stand. We fixed it at a distance below the first, by the side of the fir-tree grove. I got upon this stand after the first preaching, and was extremely surprised at the amazing sight that appeared before me. The people were nearly all under my eye; and I had not before conceived that such a vast multitude was present. Thousands hearing with attention as solemn as death, presented a scene of the most sublime and awfully-pleasing grandeur that my eyes ever beheld.

"The preachers seemed to be fired with uncommon zeal, and an extraordinary unction attended their word, while tears were flowing and sinners trembling on every side. Numbers [of them] were convinced, and saints were uncommonly quickened.

"Many preachers were now upon the ground, from Knutsford, Congleton, Wheelock, Burslem, Macclesfield, and other places, and an extraordinary variety appeared. One who was a great scholar and philosopher, and who had been an infidel, till he was converted under the preaching of Lorenzo Dow, and who had been in the field of war, and seen death flying in every direction, and walked in blood over fields covered with the dying and the dead, shewed the happiness of this land, and the gratitude we owed to God for being far from the seat of war. Another, who had seen the horrors of rebellion lately in Ireland, persuaded us to turn to righteousness, because we were exempt from such calamities. E. Anderson related the devotion he had beheld in other parts of the world, and exhorted us to turn to God lest the devout in these parts should rise in judgment against us. All the preachers seemed to be strengthened in their work; persuasion dwelt upon their tongues, while the multitudes were trembling or rejoicing around.

"The congregation increased so rapidly that a fourth preaching stand was called for. The work now became general, and the scene was most interesting. Thousands were listening with solemn attention; a company near the first stand were wrestling in prayer for mourners, and four preachers were preaching with

all their might. This extraordinary scene continued till abou four o'clock, when the people began to retire, and before six the were confined to one stand. About seven o'clock a work bega among children, six of whom were converted before the meetin broke up. About half-past eight this extraordinary meetin closed; a meeting such as our eyes had never beheld, a meetin for which many will praise God both in time and in eternity Such a day as this we never before enjoyed. It was a day spen in the active service of God; a Sabbath in which Jesus Chris made glad the hearts of his saints, and sent his arrows to th hearts of sinners. The propriety and utility of camp-meeting appeared to every one. So great was the work effected that th people were ready to say, 'We have seen strange things to-day.'"

The following account of this extraordinary meeting is give by Mr. Clowes, and substantially agrees with that furnished b Mr. Bourne.

"On the Saturday evening prior to the intended meeting, went up to the house of my friend Daniel Shubotham, and slep there all night, in order that I might be ready for the camp-meet ing next morning.

"The morning was unfavorable; it was rainy. Nevertheless resolved to proceed to the place; and on my arrival at the hil about six o'clock, I found a small group of people assembled unde a wall, singing. I immediately joined them, and several of u engaged in prayer. When we had concluded the singing an praying services, one Peter Bradburn preached a sermon, and a individual from Macclesfield followed with another. The peopl now began to be strongly affected, and we commenced anothe praying service. During the progress of these labours the peopl kept increasing in large numbers, but as they came from variou places, many were at a loss to know to what part of the hill the should make. At last a person of the name of Taylor, fro Tunstall, suggested that a flag, or something of the kind, shoul be hoisted, as a guide to the coming multitudes, directing them t the place where the religious services were going on. Accordingl

a Mr. Edward Anderson, from Kilham, in Yorkshire, unfurled something like a flag on a pole in a conspicuous and elevated position, which became the centre of attraction.

"It was about this time that I stood up on the stand to address the people. I began by giving a statement of my Christian experience, and of the motives which had influenced me to attend the meeting. Then I followed with an exhortation to all to look immediately to the Lord by faith for a present salvation. During this period of the meeting the unction of the Holy Spirit flowed with great power, and the praying labourers engaged most zealously in praying with mourners. But this did not stay the word of exhortation, it rather gave it greater energy and effect.

"A second stand was fixed, and a person from Ireland gave an exhortation; the substance of it was that we should praise God for our privileges as English christians, improve them to the glory of God, and pity and pray for the poor and spiritually degraded Irish. After this individual had concluded, Mr. Edward Anderson, already mentioned, addressed the meeting. He read a part of his life and experience, which was written in verse, interspersed with sentences of exhortation.

"As the people kept increasing, it was resolved to fix a third stand; and in the afternoon a fourth was erected, and all were occupied with preachers, one at each stand preaching at the same time. The day was now very fine, and the crowds of people immensely large.

"The meeting presented at this period a most magnificent and sublime spectacle,—four preachers simultaneously crying to sinners to flee from the wrath to come; thousands listening with devout attention, many in deep distress, and others pleading with Heaven in their behalf; some praising God aloud for the great things brought to pass, and others rejoicing in the testimony of their sins being forgiven.

"About four o'clock in the afternoon the numbers of the people were prodigious; but after this time many began to retire. Yet the power of the Highest continued with undiminished force to the

last. Towards the conclusion, the services were principall carried on by praying companies; and at the close, which too place about half-past eight o'clock in the evening, several soul were set at liberty.

"At the termination of this memorable day, I felt excessivel exhausted, as I had laboured from the commencement of the meet ing, with little cessation, till eight o'clock in the evening. Bu the glory that filled my soul on that day far exceeds my powers c description. Much of the good wrought at this great meetin remains, but the full amount of that good eternity alone wi develope; and myriads of saints and angels will everlastingly lau the Eternal Majesty on account of the day's praying on Mo Hill."

Such is the testimony borne by two unimpeachable witnesses t the extraordinary power and usefulness of the first English camp meeting.

CHAPTER III.

Several Camp Meetings.—Expulsion of Mr. HUGH BOURNE from the Old Methodist Society.—Labours of Mr. JAMES CRAWFOOT.—Standley Class formed.

THE first camp-meeting was great and glorious, and far exceeded the expectation of its friends, both as to the number of attendants and the effects it produced. The cloud of the Divine presence which then overshadowed the dark and frowning mountain of Mow was consciously realised by the congregated worshippers, and showers of blessings descended upon them. The hallowed influence of this extraordinary meeting extended far and wide, and produced a visible improvement in the morals of the people in the immediate neighbourhood. At this meeting it was announced that another would be held on Mow in July, to continue for a few days, in order to counteract the demoralizing influence of the wakes; and that another would be held at Norton in August, for the same purpose. The former was to begin on Saturday afternoon, July 18th, 1807, and the latter on Saturday afternoon, August 22nd. Both these meetings were also published in the tract written by Mr. Bourne, giving an account of the first camp-meeting, together with the following prudential regulations for their management. It was recommended—

1. To get the ground licensed under the Toleration Act, that all interruption or misbehaviour in the time of meeting might be prevented, or else punished as the law directs.

2. To provide a sufficient quantity of stands and seats.

3. To provide tents sufficient to defend the people from the inclemency of the weather.

4. To provide a large supply of coals, candles, lanterns, &c., t light the camp during the night.

5. To get provision sufficient to supply all distant comers durin the Sabbath.

6. To defray the expenses by public collections during th meeting.

Thousands of the above-mentioned tract containing these an nouncements and directions were circulated, and produced corresponding effect. Messrs. Bourne and Clowes distributed considerable number on a journey they took to Delamere Fores in Cheshire, to visit James Crawfoot, a local preacher of notoriet of whom we shall hereafter have to speak somewhat largely.

It might have been supposed that a meeting productive of suc extraordinary good would have met with the approval of all th followers of Christ, and that the ensuing camp-meeting would hav been hailed as likely to stem the torrents of vice which usuall flowed at the parish wakes, and to promote the extension of th Redeemer's kingdom. But such a supposition would have bee founded upon very imperfect views of human nature and of th variety of mental constitutions and habits of christian men. Th calm and retiring would mostly regard with disfavour such excitin scenes as these extraordinary meetings presented; the over zealou sticklers for order and stereotyped modes of worship and for keep ing up a certain kind of respectability in all efforts to do goo would look with a degree of alarm at such strange innovations a were now sought to be established, and even many of the mo enlightened and devout might hesitate to sanction such proceed ings till they had many opportunities of testing their charact and observing their effects. We are not, therefore, surprised tha even many of the followers of John Wesley, that great innovato that zealous advocate of field preaching, disapproved of the extraordinary meetings, and that the Methodist preachers Burslem and Macclesfield circuits issued hand-bills disclaiming a connection with them.

But no great revival of religion, no mighty religious movemer

among the masses of society, has ever taken place without breaking in, more or less, upon the established order of things, or without the employment of extraordinary means. And Divine Providence has from time to time raised up suitable agents for the carrying out of new and extraordinary measures; usually men of uncommon energy and undaunted courage, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and burning with ardent zeal for the divine glory and the conversion of sinners. Such were the principal agents employed in the establishment of camp-meetings in this country. Mr. Hugh Bourne, who generally took the lead in this work, though naturally bashful and retiring, was nevertheless a man of indomitable energy, and was of too stern and unbending a nature to be turned aside by trifles from what he conceived to be the way of Providence. Men of more pliant natures would have given way to the opposition which camp-meetings had to encounter. But after passing through a severe momentary conflict, in which he contemplated putting out a hand-bill to publish that "no camp-meeting would be held," his energy of character and determination of purpose were found equal to the lengthened combat he was about to sustain. In harmony with the prudential regulations he had published respecting the approaching camp-meetings, he obtained liberty from a freeholder to occupy a portion of land on Mow, and then walked to Lichfield, a distance of between thirty and forty miles, to procure a license. The registrar objecting to grant one, unless a building were erected on the ground, Mr. Bourne, on returning, erected a wooden building of considerable dimensions, which he denominated a TABERNACLE, near which he put up three tents, after the fashion of those used at American camp-meetings, and then obtained the requisite license by post. Next he took the precaution of going to the Court of Quarter Sessions at Stafford, in order to obtain a license as a Protestant Dissenting Minister. He then went to different places to secure preachers for this second camp-meeting; and after much anxiety, labour, and expense, he had the satisfaction of seeing a promising commencement of the second Mow camp-meeting, in an excellent course of

prayer on the Saturday evening, according to appointment. On the following day, Sunday, July 19, 1807, great numbers of people attended; the meeting was well supported, and proceeded with energy and effect. Many were kept away through the opposition raised by the Methodist Ministers, but Messrs. Clowes and Nixon were present, as at the former meeting, and took part in the exercises. In reference to this meeting, Mr. Clowes says: "A short time prior to the second Mow-hill camp-meeting, which had been fixed for the 19th of July, brother H. Bourne called upon me, and desired me to accompany him to purchase some pottery articles for the accommodation of the people at the approaching camp-meeting, as it was intended to erect a few tents into which the people might retire for refreshment. Accordingly, I went with brother Bourne, and the articles were bought, and paid for by him, at the works where I was employed, and dispatched to Mow-hill. Vast numbers of people attended this meeting, and it continued for three days. The influence that accompanied the word was great, and many souls were converted to God. I laboured but little at this meeting, but I felt interested in its success, and defended it with all my might against its opponents. My friend, James Nixon, laboured with extraordinary power and effect. I and many others were greatly struck with the solemnity and power which attended his ministrations. In giving out the hymn which begins with "Stop, poor sinner; stop, and think," every word appeared to shake the multitude as the wind does the forest leaves. Truly the word was with power, with the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance."

During the course of this meeting, a Mr. Stephenson, a manufacturer from the neighbourhood of Burslem, a Deist, and a persecutor of religious people, rode upon the ground, blustering, as if "he were some great one," and had authority to disperse the assembly or treat the worshippers in any way he thought fit. It had been previously reported that he would put a stop to the meeting, supposing that the Conventicle Act would enable him to do so. But the Toleration Act had long ere this been passed, and

Mr. Bourne, as we have seen, had taken the precaution to obtain a license for the premises, and had also prudently posted a notice of it. Mr. S., being directed to Mr. Hugh Bourne, as the principal person in the management of the meeting, he rode to him, and at first frowned and blustered, but after some conversation he calmed down, and rode off quietly. Returning from Mr. Bourne, in a somewhat different direction, he passed by the pole, on which the notice of the license was posted, and it is thought it attracted his attention, and made him apprehensive that he might be brought before the civil authorities for disturbing the worshippers in a place duly licensed. He immediately sent for Mr. Bourne, and, Deist as he was, he began to reason against the meeting as being forbidden in the Bible, as well as productive of harm! Mr. Bourne, like a true Protestant, mildly replied, that if he would put down in writing where these meetings were forbidden in the Scriptures, he and his friends would examine the place or places, and if they found any condemnation of such meetings, they would give up holding them. Mr. S. could not point out such a place in the Scriptures, and apparently gathering from Mr. Bourne's calm and respectful conversation that he was in no danger of being brought up for disturbing the meeting, probably thankful that he should happily escape the expense and mortification to which he had rendered himself liable, and perhaps convinced of the good intentions of the conductors of the meeting, he left them, pronouncing a blessing on their heads, and received from them a blessing in reply. God "makes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he restrains." The coming of Mr. S. to this camp-meeting was overruled for good; it encouraged many of the timid and fearful to believe that these meetings could not legally be put down, and exercised some restraint over open persecutors.

Many sinners were brought into the liberty of the Gospel on the Sabbath; the Monday's meeting was also large and powerful, and the Tuesday's meeting, though small, was effective. It was judged that about forty persons were converted on the Sunday, and about twenty on the Monday; and the meeting, according to

expectation, counteracted the wickedness of the neighbouring wake.

The success of this camp-meeting was cheering; but yet formidable opposition was raised against that appointed to be held at Norton. The subject of camp-meetings was introduced at the Methodist Conference of this year (1807), and the following minute was passed:—"It is our judgment, that even supposing such meetings to be allowed in America, they are highly improper in England, and likely to be productive of considerable mischief; and we disclaim all connection with them."

It is foreign to our purpose to discuss largely this decision of the Methodist Conference. Our publication is not a controversial one, and we shall studiously guard against writing a sentence which can give reasonable ground of offence or pain either to any section of Methodists or to evangelical Christians of any other name. But we cannot but reflect how the Conference in this case overlooked the conduct of John Wesley, who was not accustomed to discountenance any new measure adopted by his people till he had seen and examined it; otherwise he would have forbidden lay preaching and the holding of watch-nights by the Kingswood colliers. Whereas the Conference in this instance decided that camp-meetings were improper in England, and "likely to be productive of considerable mischief," though none of its members, it is said, had attended one. How much more prudent and becoming would it have been to have deferred the judgment till a correct knowledge of the meetings in question had been obtained! Besides, the METHODIST MAGAZINE, the regular Connexional organ, had for several years published exciting accounts of American camp-meetings, which was calculated to produce at least an attempt at the establishment of such meetings in this country. The passing of the above minute appears to us to be inconsistent in more respects than one; but to err is human, and no ecclesiastical assembly, whatever Rome may say to the contrary, is infallible.

The judgment of the Conference had, however, much weight

with the societies in general, and many stood aloof from the Norton camp-meeting. The superintendent of Burslem circuit, on his return from the Conference, called a meeting, and required the preachers to declare against camp-meetings. This was no more than might have been expected, and it appears to have mainly accomplished its design. The opposition to such meetings now became powerful ; many of their former advocates wavered, and even Mr. James Bourne hesitated for a time whether to continue his support. But amidst the unutterable sorrow which this opposition caused Mr. Hugh Bourne, he, after a momentary conflict, steadily persevered in his purpose ; he got the ground licensed for the projected meeting at Norton, put up tents at considerable expense, and made all needful arrangements. Many disappointments befel him ; but before the appointed time for holding the meeting arrived, his brother, Mr. James Bourne, had overcome his hesitation, from a conviction of the utility and scriptural character of such meetings, and was now ready to share in the labour and expense required in their support. The meeting began by a course of prayer on the Saturday night, according to a previous announcement, and Mr. Bourne so far followed the example of the American Methodists in this instance, as to sleep all night in one of the tents. Early on the following morning, Sunday, August 23, 1807, the meeting commenced for the day. A few friends from Harriseahead and other places, were present, as was Mr. James Nixon from Tunstall—about as difficult to be dissuaded from pursuing what he deemed a proper course as Mr. Hugh Bourne himself. The weather was occasionally unfavourable, but the congregation rapidly increased, and the meeting proceeded hopefully. The labourers were comparatively few, and when the assembly became large, they appeared to be somewhat discouraged. But just at this time the arrival of an influential stranger afforded relief,—Dr. Paul Johnson, a physician of Dublin. He was a friend of Lorenzo Dow's, and had doubtless heard much from him about the usefulness of American camp-meetings ; besides which a friend in Cheshire had sent him an account of

English camp-meetings; by these means he was induced at the cost of much time and expense to come to this meeting. He was an excellent speaker; "his voice filled the field, and his preaching took surprisingly with the hosts of potters." He was a principal supporter of the meeting, and assisted in its services on the Monday as well as on the Sabbath. This meeting closed on the Tuesday, and it proved so successful that not one of the members of the society at Norton was drawn aside by the vanities of the wake. The results were highly satisfactory to Messrs. H. and J. Bourne. They had been enabled to surmount formidable difficulties, and had overcome strong opposition. Camp-meetings now appeared to have gained an establishment; "and opposition to them," says Mr. Bourne, "never afterwards rose to any material height." We shall, however, shortly find that giving countenance and support to them led to certain persons being separated from the Old Methodist Society, among whom was Mr. William Clowes, if not Mr. H. Bourne himself.

We proceed, however, according to the order of time, first to glance at the labours of Messrs. Hugh and James Bourne. The minute of Conference against camp-meetings was still pressed, "and," says Mr. Bourne, "we were made to feel the force of it in various ways." This, unintentionally, produced one good effect,—it led the Bournes to visit various places at which the Gospel was not preached, and thereby much spiritual good was accomplished. At Norton camp-meeting they received an urgent invitation to visit Lask Edge, about four miles from Bemersley. Here they were made useful, and a society was formed, which was taken into the Leek circuit, though Messrs. H. and J. Bourne continued for some time to supply it with preaching once a fortnight. Early in the following year (1808), Mr. J. Bourne visited Tean, a village about twenty miles from Bemersley, and preached with effect in the open-air. Here, too, a society was formed, which united with the Old Methodists. Kingsley, Farley, Ramsor, and Wootton, not many miles from Tean, were also visited, and much good was effected.

The first camp-meeting held this year was on the Wrekin, the beautiful and celebrated mountain of Shropshire, a few miles from the town of Wellington, and not much farther from Madeley, the parish of the seraphic Fletcher, but nearly forty miles from Bemersley, the residence of the Bournes. On this mountain, the first Sunday in May, multitudes had annually assembled, "time out of mind," and spent the sacred day in vice and dissipation. With the God-like view of weakening, and if possible of abolishing this soul-destroying custom, these zealous men undertook a journey thither, and held a camp-meeting there on the first Sabbath in May. "The meeting began about half-past twelve o'clock," says Mr. H. Bourne; "there was a vast number of people; I had great liberty, as had others; we gave away a great many religious tracts, and about five o'clock we broke up."

On the 15th of the same month, a camp-meeting was held at Bug Lawton, in the vicinity of Congleton; and on the 29th a third camp-meeting was held on Mow.

An unexpected trial was now awaiting Mr. Hugh Bourne, namely, his expulsion from the Methodist society. This circumstance occurred at the quarterly meeting of the Burslem circuit, held on Monday, June 27th, 1808. He was not warned to attend the meeting, nor apprised of any charge to be brought against him. Without notice, in his absence, and when he knew nothing whatever of the matter, he was expelled from the society! It is painful to record such a fact, but fidelity requires it—the completeness and veracity of our narrative demand it. We have not been able to learn from any published or official document what was the charge brought against Mr. Bourne, or what was the reason assigned for his expulsion. It is, however, certain that it was not a charge of immorality; it was nothing that affected his Christian character. From the various evidence we have examined on the subject, it appears that he was regarded with disfavour on account of the determined support he rendered to camp-meetings, and as, through his numerous engagements and extensive labours, he had not frequently attended his class-meetings, his non-attendance

thereat for a certain period, was made the occasion of dismembe ing him. Though Mr. Bourne keenly felt his severance from t church to which he was ardently attached, and could not but dee the act as altogether unjustifiable, it is delightful to hear him s many years afterwards, "After all, I believe Mr. Riles [the supe intendent preacher, who is supposed to have been a chief actor Mr. B.'s expulsion] was a good man; and as he has since go the way of all the earth, I trust he died well, and now rests fro his labours." And even at the time of his expulsion, Mr. Bour showed no resentment; he paid up his arrears of class money, a attempted no disturbance in the society, but buckled on his armo to do battle with the common enemy, and laboured with increasi ardour to extend the kingdom of Christ. The following extrac from the early journals of Mr. Bourne, will show the state of h mind, and the spirit in which he prosecuted his labours after h expulsion from the old Methodist society:—

Tuesday, December 27th, 1808.—"It is now very edifying me to read letters on full sanctification. I grow more and mo spiritual every day. O Lord, fill me with thy love and thy glor and guide my steps in all things, through Jesus Christ. Amen."

Thursday, 29th.—"I had a good time at Tunstall chapel: t text was John xv. 15, 'Henceforth I call you not servants, b friends.' I felt extraordinary things at the thought of being t friend of Christ. At the prayer meeting I had an uncomm time, &c. I have lately laboured much in my closet, and it always joyful to me, it is always a feast."

Saturday, 31st.—"I set off with Wm. Clowes to Delame Forest. We went to the watch-night, and prayed the old ye out. We had an extraordinary time."

His painful expulsion was over-ruled by the gracious Providen of God for the promotion of the Divine glory and the conversio of sinners, as the subsequent portions of our narrative will de monstrate.

The next camp-meeting Mr. Bourne appears to have attende was held at Ramsor, September 4th, 1808. He was accompanie

to this camp-meeting by his friend Mr. Clowes, and Matthias Bailey and several others from Harriseahead were also present at it, "though the distance was about twenty miles." This camp-meeting was carried on chiefly by praying services; yet so much good was done that it was thought desirable to hold another shortly afterwards. Accordingly, though the autumn was considerably advanced, a second camp-meeting was appointed to be held there on the 9th of October. To this meeting, too, Messrs. Bourne and Clowes journeyed in company, the former being, as he says, "much edified by W. C." Here, for the first time, Mr. Clowes ventured to preach from a text, and was so acceptable to the people that they "encouraged him to go on in the same way." Mr. Clowes was a class-leader among the old Methodists, but had not been received as a local preacher. Soon after his conversion a meeting for mutual improvement was regularly held in his house. Being composed of local preachers, it was called "a local preachers' meeting." It was held every Saturday night, and the time was spent in reading, prayer, and friendly discussion on numerous texts of Scripture and various theological subjects. Mr. Clowes was admitted as a member in consideration of his furnishing accommodations for the meeting; and some of the local preachers occasionally engaged him to accompany them to their appointments on the Sabbaths. On going with them, and taking part in the services, he did not venture to take a text, but gave an exhortation, in which both himself and the people were greatly blessed. But at the last-named camp-meeting, as above stated, he took courage to select a text and speak from it. We have given the substance of Mr. Bourne's brief account of the circumstance, we will now insert the account recorded by Mr. Clowes, which substantially agrees with that by Mr. Bourne. "Brother H. Bourne and I went to that meeting [Ramsor first camp-meeting]. We started on the Saturday, and several of the Harriseahead friends came to our assistance. The meeting was principally carried on with praying services; a gracious and powerful unction attended it, and it was so much approved and blessed to the conversion of

souls that another followed a month after, at which brothe Bourne and I attended. We began the meeting in the morning and concluded it about five o'clock in the evening. It was at thi camp-meeting that I first ventured to take a text to preach from I had exhorted for a long time, almost from my first setting ou for heaven, but at this Ramsor camp-meeting I felt moved to tak a text, 1 John v. 12, 'He that hath the Son hath life.'"

"These two very successful meetings," says Mr. Bourne "closed the camp-meetings for the year 1808."

"In the former part of the year 1809, the current of thing went on as before." Mr. Bourne continued to labour whereve there appeared to be a providential call, and Mr. Clowes was frequently associated with him. During the ensuing summer, camp meetings were held as follows:—At Ramsor, May 21st; on Mow, June 18th; on Biddulph Moor, July 9th; and on the 16th, another large one on Mow. Several now united with Mr. Bourne in his attempts to spread the gospel in needy localities; and, to prevent confusion and disappointments, a written plan was made. The names of eight preachers were placed upon it, namely, H. Bourne, J. Bourne, T. Cotton, W. Maxfield, T. White, T. Knight, W. Alcock, and W. Turner; and the names of nine places were inserted, Gratton, Lask Edge, Gillow Heath, Congleton Edge, Brown Edge, Tean, Wootton, Ramsor, and Caldon Lowe. But if societies were formed at these places, they were placed under the care of the old Methodists, and only partially supplied with preaching by Messrs. Bourne and their associates. In November of the same year, Mr. Bourne engaged Mr. James Crawfoot to devote his time wholly to preaching and missionary labours, agreeing to pay him ten shillings a-week till the following Lady-day. "The directions of this man," says Mr. Bourne, "were to follow the openings of Providence, and get as many as he could converted, and advise them to join other connexions."

Mr. Crawfoot was a man of deep experience in the things of God, and very successful in the conversion of sinners, though fanciful in his exposition of certain portions of Scripture, and very

enthusiastic in some things. Messrs. Bourne and Clowes had made his acquaintance sometime before this, and had more than once visited him together at his residence,—had been much benefited by his devout conversation, and had united with him in his zealous efforts to save souls. A cordial attachment was formed between these three; and Mr. Crawfoot intimated to Mr. Clowes a wish to labour more extensively in connection with his two friends. "It was whilst on this excursion," says Mr. Clowes, speaking of one of his preaching excursions, "that I had some particular conversation with the old man [Mr. Crawfoot] with reference to his circumstances in life. He appeared to think that as God had taken away his wife, and as he had a talent in bringing sinners to God, if he had a little support he should prefer being in the Lord's vineyard altogether; and he observed that he thought H. Bourne and I, with himself, could work very well together in bringing sinners to the knowledge of the truth. Nothing more was said on the subject until the next time I saw brother Bourne. We talked on this matter freely, and brother Bourne said, that as he had a little money, he felt inclined to try the old man for a quarter, and it would be seen if his way opened in doing good and in saving souls."

From Mr. H. Bourne's statement we learn that compassion for Mr. Crawfoot in his temporal difficulties had some influence with him in making the engagement, while still higher and nobler motives were the chief cause. "Friday, November 17," says Mr. Bourne, "I agreed with old James Crawfoot to give him ten shillings a-week till Lady-day, to labour in the vineyard. This, I believe, God required at my hand. O Lord, bless him. There was no living man present but us two when I made the agreement with the old man. The case was this:—I found him and his family in distress; work was slack; he worked as a farmer's labourer; but he said he could get no employment, and how he and his family should get through the winter he could not tell. I was moved with pity, and as a deed of charity I made up my mind to help him through the winter: so I proposed to give him ten shillings a-week till Lady-day. The farmers' spring work

would then be coming in, and employment would be more plentiful; and, as he would be at liberty, I proposed his labouring to get souls converted, and pointed out places I would have him to visit, and wished him to make one journey into Staffordshire, but this I left optional with him. We agreed, if people made him presents, those presents should go towards making up the ten shillings a-week. When I arrived at home and informed my brother, he agreed to pay half of the ten shillings a-week."

Mr. Crawfoot accordingly devoted all his time and energies to the great work of saving souls from death: he laboured extensively and with very encouraging success. Mr. H. Bourne also frequently assisted him, spending no small portion of his time gratuitously in zealous efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ, without the least expectation or desire of forming separate societies, or a new denomination of Christians. Mr. Clowes, in like manner, rendered Mr. Crawfoot considerable assistance in his important work. "James Crawfoot," says Mr. Clowes, "began his missionary careeer on the basis of this arrangement [ten shillings per week], and as, at that period, I had only about half employment in my line of business, not being allowed to make more than £1 2s. a-week, which I could accomplish in three days or so, I joined the missionary in the neighbourhood and country around; and we did not labour in vain, nor spend our strength for nought. The old man was very useful in winning souls to Christ, and in administering comfort and encouragement to believers."

Circumstances now occurred which led to the formation of a society, which became independent of the old Methodist connexion. At Standley, four miles from Bemersley, lived Joseph Slater, who had married a cousin of the Bournes. Mr. and Mrs. Slater were wishful to have Methodist preaching introduced into the village; and, with the consent of his employer, Mr. Slater arranged with the Bournes for a Mrs. D., a female preacher, then residing for a time at Bemersley, to preach in his house. The Bournes and Mrs. D. accordingly held a meeting at Standley, on

Wednesday evening, March 14th, 1810, which resulted in the formation of a society of ten members, not one of whom, it is said, was then a member of any other community. It was expected that this society would be united with the Burslem circuit of the old connexion; but as the superintendent, Mr. Edmondson, would only consent for the place to be supplied with preaching on condition that the Bournes and their associates should not preach there at all, the terms were not satisfactory to the parties concerned. Hence this society was regarded as entirely independent of the old Methodist connexion, and has since generally been considered as the oldest society of the subsequent connexion of Primitive Methodists, the society tickets containing the following statement:—"First camp-meeting held May 31st, 1807. First class formed March, 1810." The precise *day* on which this society was formed is not recorded in any of Mr. Bourne's journals or papers, but in one place he speaks of its being formed "soon after" the first preaching service held at Standley. From an article in the PRIMITIVE METHODIST MAGAZINE for 1845, to which we find no contradiction in any of Mr. Bourne's papers, it appears that Joseph Slater, in whose house the preaching was conducted at Standley, formed the persons who had been impressed under the preaching into a class, and became their leader. Their names were Joseph Slater, Mary Slater, Elizabeth Baker, Susannah Rowcroft, Sarah Rowcroft, Ralph Goodwin, Mary Goodwin, Samuel Simcox, Thomas Redfern, and Isaac Belford. From Bourne's History of the Connexion we learn that on May 10th, 1810, Messrs. H. and J. Bourne agreed, from a sense of duty, to take charge of this class as a separate society, as it could not be incorporated with the Burslem circuit of the Old Connexion on satisfactory terms.

CHAPTER IV.

Expulsion of Mr. Clowes from the Old Methodist Society.—Becomes the Leader of a separate Society.—Mr. J. Steele Expelled from the Old Methodists, and unites with the Society connected with Mr. Clowes.—A visible bond of union formed between Messrs. Bourne and Clowes and Steele and their Societies, by the introduction of Society Tickets.

SOON after the formation of Standley class, Mr. Hugh Bourne remarks, respecting himself and his brother, "The cause or connexion was growing weighty on their hands. Six places,—Lask Edge, Tean, Wootton, Ramsor, Caldon Lowe, and Standley, were supplied statedly with preaching, besides visiting new places and holding camp-meetings."

On Sunday, June 3rd, 1810, Ramsor fourth camp-meeting was held. Messrs. H. and J. Bourne, J. Crawfoot, W. Clowes, and others attended. The meeting was powerful, and "was a means of introducing the work into Derbyshire, where, at Boylstone, Rodsley, and Hollington, societies were soon raised up, and a foundation laid for extending the work."

In September following, ten preachers were associated, and thirteen places were regularly visited. The preachers' names were the same as those formerly given, with the addition of J. Crawfoot and M. D., the female previously mentioned, who afterwards proved very unworthy of the confidence which had been put in her. The places named on the plan were materially different, some of the former ones being omitted, and several fresh ones added. Tean, Wootton, Ramsor, Lex Head, New Houses, Hollington, Boylston, Rodsley, Standley, Bemersley, Childerplay, Risley, and Runcorn, were the places now occupied, and the entire number of members was reported to be 136.

An occurrence now transpired which we must here relate, the expulsion of Mr. Clowes from the Old Methodist society. He had, as we have seen, co-operated with the Bournes, and assisted at several camp-meetings. He preached at Ramsor second camp-meeting, in October, 1808, as already stated. He soon after preached a trial sermon before the superintendent of Burslem circuit, and being approved, received regular appointments as a local preacher. These he punctually fulfilled, and was favoured with extraordinary success in the conversion of sinners and the quickening and strengthening of believers. But he still found opportunities to assist Messrs. Bourne and their missionary, Mr. Crawfoot; and he preached at Ramsor fourth camp-meeting, June 3rd, 1810, which gave offence to his brethren in the Old Connexion, and led to his expulsion from their society.

His own narrative of the event shall be given. "Much uneasiness," he says, "began to show itself among certain parties in Burslem circuit, on account of the camp-meetings, and my attending them. Accordingly, in the June quarter of 1810, my name was omitted on the preachers' plan. This proceeding excited a strong ferment throughout the country, especially amongst religious persons of various denominations. Invitations from all parts of the country flowed in upon me, soliciting me to preach, and offering me every encouragement in the name of the Lord. The travelling preachers of the Methodist New Connexion urged me to preach for them. I preached once in their chapel, and one soul was set at liberty. One of the official persons invited me to join their body; but I observed I could do nothing as yet, but wait and lay my case before the Lord, for him to direct me in my providential way.

"At the September visitation, my quarterly ticket as a member of society was withheld. When Mr. Aikenhead, the travelling preacher, came to Kidsgrove to preach and renew the tickets, as the leader of the class, I gave him my class paper to call over the names as usual; but in calling over the names he passed by my name, and called over the rest in order. In speaking to the

people, he rebuked them for their liveliness in their way worshipping and praising God; and remarked, he supposed th acted as they had been taught. The night following, the sa preacher, who was in a great measure a stranger, having but recen come into the circuit, preached at Tunstall, and afterwards cal a leaders' meeting. I stopped at the meeting in my offi character, and ventured to inquire what I had done amiss that ticket had been withheld, and my name left off the preache plan? No charge had been officially preferred against me therefore wished to know the reason of such singular proceedin I was then told my name was left off the plan because I atten camp-meetings, contrary to Methodist discipline, and that I co not be a preacher or leader amongst them unless I promised t to attend such meetings any more. I told the members of meeting that I would promise to attend every appointment on plan which should be put down for me, and to attend all t means of grace and ordinances of the Church, but to promise t to attend any more camp-meetings, I could not conscientiou do, for God had greatly blessed me at these meetings, which w calculated for great usefulness, and my motive for assisting in th was simply to glorify God, and bring sinners to the knowledge the truth as it is in Jesus. I was then told that I was no lon with them, that the matter was settled. I therefore immediat delivered up my class papers to the meeting, and beca unchurched."

Mr. Clowes was, however, present when he was thus seve from the society, and had the satisfaction of knowing the alle cause; his case thus differed from that of Mr. Bourne, who absent when he was expelled, and knew nothing of the reason of

Of this peculiar way of separating from society a man extraordinary piety and usefulness we shall say nothing. simply record the fact, leaving our readers to form their o opinions thereon. It was impossible, however, that such a m as Mr. Clowes could be silent in the cause of his Divine Mast The Word of the Lord was like a fire in his bones, and he co

not refrain from giving utterance to his fervid emotions, nor from warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come, whenever he had an opportunity. An opening immediately appeared. A Mr. Smith, of Tunstall, with whom Mr. Clowes had become a favourite, resolved that he should preach in his kitchen, in which preaching by several persons had been conducted for some time. Mr. Clowes preached accordingly. On his expulsion, some of the members of his classes went to his house, lamenting the painful occurrence. He told them they would have to choose new leaders, and leave him to the Providence of God, who, he doubted not, would direct him by His counsel. They, however, were unwilling to leave him, and inquired if he had any objection to instruct them still. He replied that if they thought it was the will of the Lord for him to do so, and should come to his house, he would give them such spiritual instruction as he was able. They accordingly attended to receive his instructions; and he thus unexpectedly became the leader of a separate society, six months after Standley class was formed, and four months after Messrs. H. and J. Bourne took charge of it as a separate society. James Nixon, Thomas Woodnorth, William Morris, and Samuel Barber, then, or soon afterwards, left the old Methodist society, and united with Mr. Clowes and his friends. Mr. Clowes, however, showed no resentment towards those who had expelled him, nor sought to make any division in the society, but at once girded up his loins to discharge the duties to which Divine Providence might call him. He says, "We had now Mr. Smith's kitchen for a preaching place, and we went on opening fresh places, and preaching Christ and Him crucified. This new movement, with the important charge which had devolved upon me in such a singular manner, brought me into great exercise of soul; and what would follow I could not tell."

In the beginning of December the same year (1810), Messrs. Thomas Woodnorth and James Nixon, wishful to promote the salvation of souls, and deeply impressed with Mr. Clowes' eminent adaptation for usefulness, offered to give him, out of their own

earnings, ten shillings a-week, if he would relinquish his business entirely, and devote all his time and energies "to the ministry of the Word" and to home missionary labours. The pecuniary sacrifice he would have to make in accepting of this offer would be considerable, for he was then earning £1 2s. a-week, though only working three or four days, and there was a prospect of his shortly having full employment, which would have materially enhanced his income; but after consulting with his wife, and seeking in earnest prayer the guidance of Divine Providence, he deliberately accepted the offer of his zealous friends, and, constrained by the love of Christ, he relinquished his secular calling, and consecrated himself entirely to the blessed work of turning men "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Commencing home missionary operations, he visited Talk o' th' Hill, Butt Lane, Hanley, and Shelton. He next visited his friends at Ramsor, and proceeded thence into Derbyshire, according to invitations he had received at the Ramsor camp-meeting afore-mentioned, and laboured very successfully, in company with Mr. Hugh Bourne, at Boylstone, Rodsley, and Hollington, and in the neighbourhood. Returning thence to Tunstall, he "found his brethren going on very well, and prospering in the Lord." He then took a missionary tour into Cheshire and Lancashire, accompanied by Mr. Crawfoot. At some places in the neighbourhood of Warrington, he met with very indifferent treatment, which may here be related as illustrative of his labours and privations at the commencement of his missionary career. At one place the people threw water upon him while preaching, and created much disturbance.—"On my way back to Warrington, a distance of seven miles," he says, "I was waylaid; the rebels rushed upon me suddenly, and threw stones and clods of dirt; but although they flew all around me, I was untouched; the darkness of the night prevented their taking sure aim, I therefore escaped unhurt. During this attack, I shouted glory to God with all my might, and I verily believe God helped me with my shouts, and confounded my persecutors, for after roaring and bellowing like bulls



for some time, I suddenly lost them, and arrived safely at my lodgings."

"At another place, after preaching and labouring very hard, I was put into a cold room" [very different, it is likely, from the warm and comfortable bedrooms in the Staffordshire Potteries]; "the bed stood under a window, the half of which had been knocked out, and it being a cold, snowy night, in the morning I found a considerable quantity of snow in the room, and on the bed. When I was summoned to breakfast, matters had not very materially improved. I was served with a portion of milk and water porridge; and whilst I was endeavouring to eat them, a great blustering woman entered the house, and began to pour upon me a volley of abuse, declaring I was after nothing but my belly. After this rough encounter, I took a solitary walk, and as I reflected on my comfortable home, and wife and friends that I had left at Tunstall, I wept; but I knew I was not labouring in vain, and my soul was happy in God. I preached several times at Warrington after this, and had great success."

Returning to Tunstall, he and Messrs. Nixon and Woodnorth, "opened several fresh places, namely, Golden Hill, Lawton Heath, Englesea Brook, Coppenhall, and Roggen Row."

On Good Friday, 1811, he conducted the first lovefeast at Tunstall, after his separation from the Old Methodist society, in Mr. Smith's kitchen, the usual place of worship for him and his friends. Mr. James Steele, a relative and the steward of Mr. Smith, and who, "on account of Mr. Smith's great age, was much with him in the house, and conducted the family worship," was supposed by some of the Old Methodists to be present at this lovefeast. A charge was therefore preferred against him at a leaders' meeting on the following Tuesday evening; and though he was not present at the lovefeast in question, he was expelled from society for having attended the worship at Mr. Smith's! On the following Sunday morning, he was forbidden to officiate as usual as superintendent of the Sabbath-school. He quietly left the premises, but the majority of the teachers and scholars followed

him. He urged them to return to the school, but they refused, and resolved to remove to some other place where they could be favoured with his efficient services without interruption. During the week, Mr. John Boden, a manufacturer, having a large room (generally used for earthenware) unoccupied, offered it for the service of Mr. Steele and his friends. With Mr. Boden's consent, Sabbath-day preaching was also instituted in this room, and the infant cause flourished. Mr. Steele had been a leader of two classes, and when he was expelled most of his members refused to leave him, though he strongly advised them to the contrary, urging them to unite with other classes. After a little deliberation, both he and they united with the infant society with which Mr. Clowes was connected, and thus Mr. Steele became again intimately associated with his highly-esteemed friend, and they had the happiness of seeing many sinners converted to God. Between Messrs. H. and J. Bourne and J. Crawfoot and W. Clowes there had been a strong religious fellowship for a few years; and after they began their home missionary operations, and established separate societies, they frequently visited each other, having the same sublime objects in view—the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Their vigorous faith and ardent piety were strong bonds of union between them, unseen by the eye of sense, but understood by those who have spiritual discernment; but a more regular and visible union was now about to take place. Mr. F. Horobin, of Ramsor, offered to pay for the printing of society tickets. Mr. Hugh Bourne mentioned this to Mr. Clowes and others at Tunstall, and after some discussion, it was agreed to accept Mr. Horobin's offer. Mr. Bourne accordingly ordered tickets to be printed. They bore the date of May 30th, 1811; and "on account of the peculiar situation of the connexion," says Mr. Bourne, "the following passage of Scripture was chosen [to be inserted on them], 'But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against.'"

CHAPTER V.

First General Meeting held.—Mr. STEELE appointed Circuit Steward.—New Chapel built at Tunstall.—Another General Meeting held.—The Name of Primitive Methodists taken.—Copy of the first Plan printed.

THE introduction of society tickets was a highly beneficial arrangement. Yet though it necessarily led to the quarterly visitation of the classes by the preachers, a custom fraught with numerous religious advantages among large and established Methodist societies, bringing the preachers and the people into immediate contact, and affording valuable means of ascertaining the spiritual state of the societies, in this case the direct spiritual benefit was not very great at first. "It did not materially increase their [the preachers'] knowledge of the state of the people," says Mr. Bourne. "They had constantly spent much time (especially in country places) in explaining the Scriptures, and opening the nature of experience in the various families."

The introduction of tickets was, however, a means of speedily leading to a financial arrangement of much importance and benefit. Some of the people expressed their desire to contribute towards the maintenance of the cause, which, till now, they had had no suitable and regular opportunity of doing. Hitherto the money expended in supporting the two travelling preachers had been given chiefly by four individuals, Messrs. H. and J. Bourne, J. Nixon, and T. Woodnorth; "but as these had to live by the labour of their own hands," the expense had begun to be too great for their limited means; and the connexion could not properly exert its energies nor extend its borders without additional

support. "It was also a general opinion that the weight ought no longer to be borne by a few individuals." [Bourne's History.] A general meeting, therefore, was held at Tunstall, July 26, 1811, where it was agreed that money should in future be regularly collected in the societies, in order to meet the necessary expenditure: and if this should prove insufficient, recourse should again be had to the benevolence of private individuals. The two travelling preachers, Messrs. Crawfoot and Clowes, were to receive their salaries from the societies, and Mr. James Steele was appointed the Circuit Steward, the first officer of the kind in the connexion. The members of society were then estimated at about two hundred.

This was the first GENERAL meeting held in the connexion; and earnest prayers were offered to Almighty God for his guidance in the business, and his blessing thereon. How it was constituted we cannot speak with certainty. We judge it was composed of preachers, leaders, and stewards.

The Sunday-school and congregation at Tunstall prospered so greatly, that the room lent by Mr. Boden soon became too small, and, as "it could not be had for any length of time," it became necessary to seek for better and permanent accommodation. For this purpose, ground was bought for a chapel. The land was selected on the 13th of May, 1811, and the writings were signed on the 11th of the following month. The chapel appears to have been commenced forthwith, and to have been speedily completed. This first chapel in the infant connexion was sixteen yards long and eight wide, and galleried at one end. It had no ceiling, and the walls were not coated. Its plainness and neatness, however, gave great satisfaction. It was built in such a form that it might easily be converted into four houses, such as were common in the place. This form was adopted out of prudence, as it was then a matter of doubt whether the connexion would be of long continuance. Many could see no appearance of stability in it, and even its leading members were mostly fearful as to the result, though they were strongly united in faith and love, and in their zeal for the conversion of sinners.



Both preachers and people met with many discouragements. The former had long journeys and much toilsome labour, and frequently had to encounter considerable opposition, and the latter had to endure unmerited reproach. But the work continued to progress more or less, and additional places were opened. In September, 1811, the preachers were seventeen in number, and the same number of places occupied:—Tunstall, Norton, Golden Hill, Pitt's Hill, Mow, Standley, Brown Edge, Bagnall, Baddeley Edge, Roggin Row, Talk o' th' Hill, Butt Lane, Lawton Heath, Englesea Brook, Coppenhall, Cloud, and Ramsor. All these places, except two or three, are in Staffordshire, and with the exception of Tunstall (then but a small place, though now a town of nine or ten thousand inhabitants), are all villages or hamlets. During the ensuing quarter other places were successfully visited: promising openings were effected, and additional societies were formed. Even in the winter season home missionary operations were carried on, and the borders of the little connexion were enlarged.

Early in the following year it contained twenty-three preachers and thirty-four places. Such was the number reported at an important meeting held at Tunstall, February 13th, 1812.

It was at this meeting that a denominational name was first officially assumed. Some distinctive name had become necessary on many accounts. At Tunstall, indeed, a name had already been given to the society by the inhabitants; not out of disrespect, but simply for the sake of distinction. The members were familiarly called "Cloweses," and the chapel, "Clowes's chapel." But this designation could neither be satisfactory nor appropriate to the connexion as a whole. Neither the name CLOWESITES nor that of BOURNITES would have given *general* satisfaction, and we think it was well that neither was attempted to be imposed. Whether some other and equally appropriate and significant name than that of PRIMITIVE METHODISTS, which the meeting agreed upon, might not have been adopted, it is useless now to inquire. We believe no offence was intended to the old body, though many of the preachers and members of that community appear to regard the

name as inaccurate, and the assumption of it as uncharitable towards them. Mr. Hugh Bourne, who took an active part in most of the transactions of the infant denomination, had no share in the selection of this name. From his own lips we received the statement, that he had been actively engaged in the business of the meeting during the day: that it was becoming late, and, jaded with his mental efforts, he had been overcome with momentary drowsiness, during which time the meeting agreed upon the name in question, of which he was apprised when he awoke up to the business. It is probable that the members of the meeting wished to be called Methodists of some kind: and as Mr. Wesley and the early Methodists preached much in the open-air, which practice had now unhappily declined considerably among the Methodists of the largest body, but had been revived in this infant community, they considered that the application of PRIMITIVE METHODISTS was proper and significant. It would have been difficult, if not impossible, to have assumed a denominational name which would have given offence to no one; and why should any of our Wesleyan friends be offended with the denominational name which our fathers took? Have not they themselves subsequently made an addition to their original name, to which both our people and the Methodist New Connexion might raise plausible objections? Mr. Watson, in his article on "Methodists," in his "Biblical and Theological Dictionary," says, "Methodists is a name which now principally designates the followers of the Rev. John Wesley. The societies raised up by the instrumentality of the Rev. George Whitfield were also called Methodists, and in Wales especially are still known by that appellation. For distinction's sake, therefore, and also because a number of smaller sects have broken off from the Methodist societies since Mr. Wesley's death, the religious body which he raised up and left organised under his rules have of late been generally denominated the WESLEYAN METHODISTS." Now, are not the Methodists of the New Connexion, and our people, Wesleyan Methodists too? We cordially embrace and teach the same doctrines which Wesley taught. We follow most

of the practices which he adopted; and for many years our ministers have imitated his example of open-air preaching far more than the ministers of the old body. Might we not, therefore, object to the *apparent* exclusiveness of the old community in having prefixed to their former name, WESLEYAN, as uncharitable, and, by implication, unjust? But we will not make our Wesleyan friends "offenders for a word," nor put any uncharitable construction upon their assumption of the additional name Wesleyan. For "distinction's sake," we will cheerfully accord it to them. For "distinction's sake," too, if on no other ground, we claim to be called by our proper name, Primitive Methodists. But whether our Wesleyan friends will acknowledge this claim, or otherwise, is with us a matter of little moment; and we hope our friends will never make it an occasion of unhallowed contention. We advise them quietly and peaceably to use it as their right, but never zealously to contend about it.

This name is our distinctive appellation, and being enrolled in Her Majesty's High Court of Chancery, and contained in all our regular chapel deeds and legal documents, cannot readily be altered. Let us, however, not be so anxious to be *called* by this name as to *deserve* it. Let us be careful to cultivate the simplicity and zeal, the faith and piety, by which the first Methodists were distinguished; let us diligently follow their example of regular open-air preaching, and of other self-denying and laborious efforts to promote the glory of God in the salvation of precious souls. Let us seek to preserve the life and fervour of apostolic Christianity; to maintain plain, pointed, and energetic preaching; to "condescend to men of low estate," and strive to diffuse the savour of Jesus' name to the uttermost possible extent. Thus shall we be in spirit and in practice PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS as well as PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.

At the meeting at which the denominal name was chosen, it was also arranged that printed preachers' plans should be issued, written ones having hitherto been used. A copy of the first printed plan shall here be inserted.

A PLAN OF THE PREACHERS IN THE SOCIETY OF THE PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.

1812.	MARCH.		APRIL.				MAY.					JUNE.			PREACHERS' NAMES.
	22	29	5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	—o—
Tunstall, 2 and 6 o'clock	6	5	8	2	5	3	1	6	18	2	7	2	1	4	1 J. Crawfoot
Norton, 2; Brown Edge, 6.	17	11	16	12	19	21	13	9	10	12	6	15	20	13	2 J. Steele
Standley, 2; Baddeley Edge, 4.	20		17		10		15		21		11		10		3 J. Bourne
Bagnall, 2; Baddeley Edge, 4		16		19		9		13		20		21		23	4 H. Bourne
Butt Lane, 2; Talk o' th' Hill, 6.	10		14		15		10		17		9		16		5 W. Clowes
Cloud, 10 and 2	9		6		13		6		10		19		4		6 R. Bayley
Woodhouse Green, 10 and 2		15		17		10		3		9		20		14	7 W. Alcock
Whiston, 9; Alton, 6.	12		11		22		19		3		20		14		8 T. Woodnorth
Stanton, 2; Swinsco, 6		3		15		22		12		14		19		12	9 E. M'Evoy
Englesea Brook, 9; Betley, 1½	23	12	20	14	17	11	9	16	19	7	23	9	3	17	10 J. Nixon
Coppenhall, 2; Weston, 7.	3	8	19	11	20	18	11	10	9	5	12	16	23	9	11 H. Mattinson
Stoke, 10½; Cotton Wash, 2	11	10	23	9	16	20	23	4	15	16	3	10	17	19	12 T. Alcock
Cauldon, 10; Wootton, 2; Ramsor, 6		4		8		5		1		18		7		8	13 T. Hulme
Hollington, 10; Boylston, 2; Rodsley, 6	7		4		8		5		1		18		7		14 J. Marsh
Roston, 2; Rocester, 6		7		4		8		5		1		18		7	15
Cannock, 2; Cannock Wood, 6.	5		7		4	4		8	8		1	1		18	16 J. Boden
Biddulph Moor, 2	4	9	10	3	11	12	7	19	6	17	16	8	9	10	17 S. Broad
Rizley		1					18				5				18
Five Crosses				1				18				5			19 H. Wood
															20 S. Simcock
															21 M. Brown
															22 T. Buxton
															23 W. Morris

These places are mostly in Staffordshire; three or four are in Cheshire, about the same number in Derbyshire, and one or two in Lancashire.

We are unable to determine on what principle the names of the preachers were placed in the order here presented. It could neither be according to their age, the time they had been converted, the period at which they began to preach, nor the influence they exerted in the infant community. It is observable that though J. Crawfoot, one of the travelling preachers, is placed first, W. Clowes, the other, is only the fifth; and that J. Steele is before the Bournes, and J. Bourne before H. Bourne. We presume, however, it was an order with which they were all satisfied, for we meet with no complaint about it; and here we shall leave the matter.

At the forenamed meeting, "arrangements were made to hold quarter-day meetings, for managing the affairs of the connexion." "The account of this meeting," says Mr. Hugh Bourne, "appears regularly to conclude the history of the origin of the Primitive Methodists." Perhaps it might more properly be said to conclude the history of the origin, formation, and organisation of the connexion. With this account we close our fifth chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

Progress of the Connexion from 1812 to 1817.—Withdrawal of Mr. J. Crawfoot.—Adhesion of Mr. J. Benton.—Mr. J. Wedgwood.—Formation of Rules.—The nickname of "Ranters" first given to the Community.

THE first printed plan, a copy of which is inserted in the preceding chapter, was issued early in 1812. The only account given in Mr. Bourne's history of the progress of the community during that year is the following: "The work kept enlarging, and the connexion went on in a kind of regular way, without much variation, throughout the year." We, however, gather a little additional information from Mr. Clowes' journals. After narrating a successful visit to Ramsor and the vicinity, he says, "We next opened Threapwoodhead, Denstone, Froghall Hanging-bridge, and other villages, in which God owned the labours of his servants in the salvation of souls and in the formation of christian churches." Joseph Biddulph, of Froghall, had heard Mr. Clowes preach at Kingsley; and "the Lord," says Mr. Clowes, "converted his soul. He then gave me an invitation to preach in his house at Froghall. I did so;—the house was large, the congregation overflowing, and the season will never be forgotten by the people assembled on that occasion."

The strange opinion formed of Mr. Clowes by one person in this locality, and the fierce opposition which he and others of his brethren had then to meet, may be learned from a letter written by Mr. Thomas Burndred to Mr. Clowes, and published in the journals of the latter:—"I wish to call to your recollection that

Friday evening when you, along with Joseph Biddulph, got into my house undiscovered, when Mr. Sargeant was preaching; after he concluded he called for some one to pray, when you broke forth with a power and glory I shall never forget; sinners cried out, and believers rejoiced; but a certain farmer who was present was so strangely infatuated as to conclude you were possessed by the devil, and he resolved if ever you came thither again he would *shift you off*. But, alas! poor man, he afterwards broke a blood vessel, and died instantly. At this time John Buxton, senr., John Buxton, junr., and I began to preach, and opposition gathered strength and persecution raged. John Buxton, senr., went to preach at a small village near Froghall, and a Mr. B., who kept a large bull, ordered his man to loose him, and turn him into the congregation. The man made three attempts to drive in the bull, but failed; while exerting himself with all his might, the bull turned on him, and he had to run with all his speed in order to escape. A few days after this circumstance the man was seized with a violent distemper, which terminated his life, and his master committed suicide." We leave our readers to form their own judgment upon these occurrences.

Shortly afterwards, while Mr. Clowes was conducting divine service at Warrington, in Lancashire, he was interrupted by a magistrate, whose rude behaviour and profane language were highly derogatory to his official dignity. "I preached at Warrington, at Mrs. Richardson's," says Mr. Clowes, "where I had 'times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.' I was conducting a religious service in her house one evening, when a magistrate came in and demanded a sight of my license. I handed it to him. He then said he wanted to see the license of the house as a place for preaching. One of the people told him it was above. He said, 'I must have it down.' The individual replied, 'It is in heaven.' He then began to swear and order the congregation to disperse. One man rose to obey the magistrate's order, when Mrs. Richardson exclaimed, 'Sit down, my friend, and be quiet. My house is my own!' She then cried out in prayer for God to save

Justice L. At this the magistrate endeavoured to effect his escape. but Mrs. Richardson followed him into the street, praying aloud for the Lord to have mercy on him. He then told her he would send the water engines, and blow her windows out; but she continued to pray aloud for him, and he hastened away, leaving the bible and hymn-book in the street, which he had taken from before me whilst I was preaching, but carrying away my license. A few days afterwards I went to him, accompanied by a friend. When he saw us approaching his house, he came out with the license in his hand, and gave it to me saying, 'Your servant, sir.' He immediately retired into the house, or else I should have given him a word on the impropriety of his conduct."

Mr. Clowes afterwards preached several times with success at Overton, near Runcorn, and then proceeded to Liverpool, where he preached near the theatre; but his visit to this great town does not appear to have been followed up, and whatever good might result from it is unknown to the compiler.

Guided by the arrangement in Mr. Clowes' journal, we have inserted the foregoing incidents as having occurred in the year 1812, but as there is a partial lack of dates in the accounts, it is possible that some of the incidents might occur in the previous year, or even in the following one.

In the year 1813 the small community made some progress, and extended its borders. In the spring, "the work flourished at Mercaston, Hulland, Turnditch, and Weston-under-wood, in Derbyshire, and a number of zealous, useful, praying labourers were raised up." To promote the general good of the district, a Religious Tract Society was formed. Mr. Hugh Bourne procured some tracts for the distributors, and gave them instructions how to proceed in their labours. They entered heartily into the work, prayed with families wherever there was an opening, and appear to have been favoured with great success, being made the means of opening the way for the preaching of the gospel in several needy villages. "These labourers," says Mr. Bourne, "pushed on their work with so much life and vigour, that in a short time there was

a pressing call for prayer meetings at several new places." These pious persons were therefore arranged in praying companies, each company comprising three or four persons, and were appointed on a plan to hold regular prayer meetings at the places in question. Being at liberty to exercise their gifts as they thought best, they not only engaged in singing and prayer, but also gave brief exhortations, and in due time some of them became acceptable preachers. Much good resulted from these zealous efforts, and the societies were increased and strengthened. The work of God prospered also in Staffordshire, and a new chapel was built at the village of Talk o' th' Hill, three or four miles from Tunstall.

In this year, too, an opening appears to have been effected at several places on the borders of Staffordshire and Derbyshire. Mr. Clowes says, "I preached the gospel of the grace of God at Stonepit Hill, Fleet Green, Cow Head, Warslow, Holme End, Allston Field, Mill Dale, Hartington, Butterton, Windy Bank, and Onecote; at all the places God poured out his Spirit, many were truly saved, and at most of these places christian churches were formed." We are not, perhaps, to understand from this that no societies had been formed at those places previous to Mr. Clowes' visit, but that about that time those new churches were formed.

The progress of the connexion during this year was, however, somewhat retarded by circumstances which arose in relation to Mr. James Crawfoot. Though a man of fertile imagination, and very pathetic and effective in his public addresses, he was very defective in judgment, and perhaps in christian humility. He appears on some account to have cherished a very unfriendly feeling towards Mr. Hugh Bourne, and to have whispered several unfavourable things respecting him in the societies, which things are believed to have been unfounded, and the whispers to have proceeded chiefly from Mr. Crawfoot's mortified feelings at seeing Mr. Bourne acquire greater influence in the connexion than himself. Be this as it might, when he was warned to attend a meeting to answer to charges which were to be brought against him by Mr.

Bourne, he declined to attend, and became separated from the connexion. His course as an itinerant preacher was short, extending only to between three and four years; and much space cannot, therefore, be allotted to him in this brief history. We will only add, that he lived many years after his separation from the Primitive Methodist community, and died, it is believed, in peace at an advanced age.

But if the connexion sustained the loss of Mr. James Crawfoot, it gained the adhesion of Mr. John Benton, who for a few years was very useful in missionary labours. Mr. Hugh Bourne became acquainted with him in July, 1810, when on a visit to Mr. D. Buxton, of Wyrley Bank, South Staffordshire. "He had been brought up in ignorance," says Mr. Bourne, "and had not much command of language. His knowledge of the ministry was small, but his zeal was great, and he had a deal of success in awakening sinners. When souls were awakened he was at a loss, knowing but little of justification [by faith]." Mr. Bourne, however, was the means of leading him into a clearer knowledge of the way of salvation. At his request, Mr. Bourne attended a class-meeting with him at Essington Wood, and "spoke to the people, and the Lord made bare his arm; six souls were set at liberty, and the man [Mr. Benton] entered fully into the knowledge of a present salvation." He did not, however, immediately unite with the connexion. Hence, neither his name nor that of Wyrley Bank, nor of Essington Wood, appear on the plan for 1812. He occasionally attended distant camp-meetings, and in various ways co-operated with the preachers, but he appears not to have formally united with the society till the quarterly meeting of October, 1813. "Monday, 4th, we had quarter-day," says Mr. Bourne, "and John Benton joined us. This, I think, is of the Lord." We shall have occasion to introduce him again to the notice of our readers.

A far more useful man, though eccentric in some things, now also comes before us, and for a time will take an active and distinguished part in the movements and success of the connexion,

namely, Mr. John Wedgwood. The circumstances connected with his conversion and the exact time when he united with the connexion we are unable to furnish. But some remarkable instances of his labours, persecutions, and successes will shortly claim our attention.

The first thing that presents itself to our notice in the year 1814, is the adoption of rules for the regulation of the societies. Among Protestants, the Holy Scriptures are regarded as a sufficient rule both of faith and practice. But the New Testament presents rather the *principles* of Church government, than specific forms of discipline, leaving the latter to be arranged according to circumstances, providing they be in harmony with the principles laid down by Divine authority. Even the most strenuous advocates of Independency or Congregationalism, must admit that cases are continually transpiring which demand the formation of rules or the adoption of regulations which are not, and could not be expected to be, explicitly given in the New Testament. Bible and Tract Societies, Sabbath-school institutions, and numerous other benevolent and religious associations connected with christian churches, cannot be efficiently conducted without proper regulations, for the making of which the Scriptures furnish certain principles, but nothing more. The application of those principles to regulations for the guidance and management of the societies united with the Primitive Methodist Connexion had now become requisite, and was ardently desired by many of the members. At the March quarterly meeting of the preceding year, "an arrangement was made," says Mr. Bourne, "to meet, what appeared to be, the general wish of the people. A committee was formed to draw up a code of rules and regulations for the whole body, and to submit the same to the ensuing quarter-day. This committee consisted of James Steele, Hugh Bourne, and another person who was a schoolmaster. But the matter was not carried into effect; for the committee were soon of opinion that the undertaking was too weighty and too great for them. Under this persuasion they relinquished the task, and the Midsummer quarter-day did little

in it. During the next quarter the people were very pressing to have the rules completed; but the committee, from a consciousness of their inability, still declined it. In consequence of this, the quarterly meeting, held October 4th, 1813, made an order that sketches of rules should immediately be drawn up; and that they should be read during the quarter in every society, and that all the objections and improvements suggested by the various societies should be brought in writing to the next quarter-day. This was diligently carried into effect, and it answered several very valuable purposes. The societies pointed out a great variety of objections and improvements; and during the quarter, prayer and supplication was made to God, almost without ceasing, on this behalf. On Monday, January 3rd, 1814, the whole were laid before the quarter-day board; and an order was made that the rules, in their improved state, should be printed immediately." They were accordingly printed early in the same year.

We have perused the rules in question; they agree with the character and circumstances of the people, at the time they were enacted, but are too long for insertion in this place.

The next thing worthy of notice during this year is, that the missionary efforts appear to have slackened; a calamity which has too often befallen the Church of Christ in its various sections, and one against which it is its duty constantly to guard. "The connexion at first," says Mr. Bourne, "employed its exertions chiefly in missionary labours, by means of which it greatly flourished. But when a considerable number of societies were raised up, the missionary exertions began to decline; and, in the former part of the year 1814, they were laid aside." It was of course necessary that the newly-formed societies should be efficiently supported; and it was probably thought by the cautious and less enterprising portion of the leading friends that they could not then do more than properly sustain and strengthen these societies. But zeal and enterprise, as well as caution and prudence, are requisite for the well-being of Christian societies, as well as for the evangelization of the world. A missionary spirit is essential to the

prosperity of Christian churches. Let missionary efforts decline, and the vitality of the churches will become weak and sickly. The suspension of missionary efforts by these infant societies, though only for a short period, was injurious to their best interests, and retarded their progress; comparative languor and feebleness began to prevail in them, and they ceased to prosper as heretofore. A great improvement, however, was ere long effected. "A few enterprising individuals again entered upon missionary labours, and the Lord set before them an open door." This was the means of diffusing additional life, vigour, and zeal through the societies. "Belper, in Derbyshire," says Mr. Bourne, "was the first place opened on this occasion; and several pious praying labourers from the societies at Mercaston, Weston-under-wood, and Turnditch, laboured diligently in the work at Belper. The meetings there, on some occasions, continued late in the evening, on account of souls being in distress. When these powerful meetings were closed, the praying people were accustomed to sing through the streets as they returned home. This circumstance procured them the name of 'Ranters,' which afterwards spread very extensively." Though this uncouth name has a bad meaning, and is a nick-name which no well-bred person, nor courteous Christian, will apply to the Primitive Methodists, unless through ignorance of their proper name, we are not sure whether in some localities it has not been rendered subservient to the interests of the connexion, by awakening curiosity and inducing numbers to attend the preaching of the missionaries, who would not otherwise have been brought under the ministry of the Word. This does not, however, afford a sound argument for the deliberate and habitual use of the name; that of "Primitive Methodists" was originally assumed, and is the legal name of the community.

Some persecution is said to have distinguished the entrance of the friends into Belper; but the beneficial effects of their labours appear soon to have produced a favourable impression upon some of the principal inhabitants. "Our mission extended to Belper," says Mr. Clowes, "and our labours were crowned with prosperity."

Mr. Strutt, the proprietor of several large cotton factories, perceiving a decided change wrought by our instrumentality in many of his work-people, became very friendly to us. The place in which we worshipped being far too small, we made application to Mr. Strutt for land on which to erect a chapel; he kindly offered us as much land as we wanted at a shilling per yard; a chapel was soon raised, which I, with others, had the pleasure of opening.

"After this," [the opening of Belper,] says Mr. Bourne, "the work spread to Derby and the adjacent places." We have more ample information on the subject in Mr. Clowes' journals.—After narrating the opening of Belper chapel, Mr. Clowes says: "I then proceeded, and preached at Milford, where the Word ran and was glorified, and where a society was formed. From thence I went to Derby, and sounded the Gospel trumpet; and notwithstanding there were many things which perplexed the friends, besides considerable persecution, yet the work of God rolled on, a chapel was built, and a numerous congregation was raised; so overwhelming were the multitudes, that after the doors were thrown open, in a few minutes the chapel used to be filled to excess, on one occasion the chapel was so crowded, and the air so bad, that the lights would not burn. The chapel-keeper endeavoured to trim them, but some of the persecutors created a disturbance. I therefore cried to God to still the raging of the enemy: the rebels felt the power and were struck; and as the chapel-keeper opened the door they escaped. One of them, however, threw a stone at his head, and cut him severely. This produced great confusion, and terminated the service for the night. The man who threw the stone was brought up before the mayor for this outrage, and was committed.

"At this place [Derby], a soldier in the Royal Artillery, who was stationed at the Armoury, was a great help to the cause, both in the getting up of the chapel, and in the converting work, besides supporting the preachers. Having no friends at the beginning to take us in, I often went with the soldier to the

Armoury to sleep. It was rather a trial at first to have to climb up without steps, one tier above another, to get into the birth, or sort of box-bed; but I remembered I was a missionary, and it behoved me not to demur about little matters of convenience and comfort. I had counted the cost, and was prepared by the grace of God to take up my cross and follow Jesus through honour and dishonour.

"In the vicinity of Derby I preached at several places,—Chaddison, Draycott, Windley, Burniston, Normanton; where my labours, along with those of my coadjutors, were blessed in the conversion of sinners to God."

Derby appears to have become the head of a circuit in 1816, the second circuit formed in the connexion. "Before this period," says Mr. Bourne, "the whole of the connexion was managed in one circuit only."

CHAPTER VII.

Missionary efforts extended into Nottinghamshire.—Nottingham becomes the head of the Circuit.—Persecution and success at Bottesford.—Persecution at Newark.—Death of a persecuting Barber.—Determined persecution at Shelford.

IN the foregoing chapter we had to notice a temporary suspension of missionary labours; in the present we must glance for a moment at the declining efficiency of camp-meetings. These extraordinary meetings were at first distinguished by short discourses and numerous and powerful praying services, which produced an agreeable variety, called the gifts of the people into useful exercise, and largely contributed to their success. But more preaching and less praying gradually gained ground, and instead of short discourses, adapted to the occasion, some of the preachers unhappily expatiated at great length. One local preacher, it is said, "grumbled because he had only an hour allowed for his sermon!" It would have been more becoming and more profitable for him to have considered whether all that was valuable in his discourse might not have been compressed into a quarter of the length. These long sermons wearied the people, distracted their attention, trespassed upon the time heretofore allotted to praying services, and seriously militated against the usefulness of camp-meetings. This was an evil which Mr. H. Bourne and others greatly deplored; but remedial measures were ere long applied, which happily proved successful. The "Narrative of a Mission to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick," &c., by J. Marsden, Methodist Missionary, was put into the hands of Mr. H. Bourne,

and suggested to his mind the propriety of restoring regular praying services to the camp-meetings. One meeting, conducted according to this plan, was held at Mercaston, in Derbyshire, on Sunday, June 9th, 1816. "It was a very powerful meeting," says Mr. Bourne; "the praying services were wonderfully supported," and "the work of God broke out with power."

The good effects of this meeting appear to have been great; a considerable quickening took place in the societies in that neighbourhood, and camp-meetings generally were apparently restored to their original power.

In this year (1816) the missionary efforts of the connexion appear to have extended into Nottinghamshire.

"From Derbyshire I afterwards went on to mission in the county of Nottingham," says Mr. Clowes, "where the Almighty greatly prospered the cause in which we embarked; and, notwithstanding the powers of earth and hell stood in formidable phalanx, and opposed our advance, yet, unappalled, we dashed forward, and 'in the name of the Lord we lifted up our banners.'"

Mr. Clowes, however, does not appear to have been the first missionary who visited this country. A camp-meeting is said to have been held in Nottingham Forest, some time in this year, and it is probable that the town of Nottingham was visited about the same period, or perhaps a few months previously. Mr. Weston, of Lex Head, near Ramsor, is said to have been the means of introducing the cause into this town, and to have laboured there much at his own expense. Mr. R. Winfield, who had some short time before united with the connexion, and become useful in missionary labours, also "made a good impression in preaching" there, and S. Kirkland still more so; "but John Benton," says Mr. H. Bourne, "was for a considerable time a main staff." Mr. Bourne preached there himself, August 12th, 1816. He says: "I spoke to a great multitude from Eph. vi. 19. It was a glorious time. There has been a surprising work at this place. The preaching-room is 68 feet 8 inches long, and 33 feet 3 inches wide."



"In the town of Nottingham," says Mr. Clowes, "we preached in a large room that had been used as a manufactory, which was generally well filled. We experienced strong persecution in the beginning: but on application to the magistrates, the outward persecution was in a measure quelled. Sometimes amid the storm and disquietude of the wicked, I have seen the congregation shake with the power of God; in the valley of dry bones, bone has come to his bone, and a noble army of living souls soon stood up to the glory and praise of God. Multitudes of conversions took place in that large room. Scenes were witnessed that gave joy to angels, and thrilled both preachers and people with emotions of gratitude, and led them to sing in transports of praise." The prosperity of the work at Nottingham, and the decline of the society at Derby, occasioned the former place to become the head of the second circuit instead of the latter, which circuit was therefore called Nottingham circuit.

In the year 1817, the preachers visited many other towns and villages in Nottinghamshire, with various measures of acceptance and success. "At Bidworth," says Mr. Clowes, "the work flourished; in two months we raised a lovely society of fifty-two members. I had an extraordinary time in meeting the class for tickets, and in preaching afterwards one woman passed from death unto life. Two sermons which I preached afterwards were greatly owned of God; many were pierced with sorrow of a godly sort, and four or five found redemption in the blood of Christ.

"At Calverton, I formed a small society. The fortnight following I preached there with my full liberty, and united five more members to the society, making in all sixteen. I then proceeded to Oxton, where the Lord worked powerfully among the people. One man was arrested in such a manner that he would have fallen to the ground, had not some of the people rushed to his assistance, and held him up. Next morning, another man, who had been in deep distress all night on account of his sins, came to me, and accompanied me out of the town. After he had related his distress, we kneeled down by the roadside, under a tree, and the Lord in mercy set his soul at liberty.



"At Lambly, I preached in a chapel alternately occupied by the New Connexion Methodists and the Independents. Mr. Smith entertained us at this place, and was much attached to our interest. I had a very powerful time in the preaching service, and afterwards gave tickets to a society of twenty-two members."

Ratcliffe-on-Trent, Bingham, East-Bridgeford, Whatton, and numerous other places are said to have been visited with much success by Mr. John Benton. At some of the places he met with considerable persecution; but the Lord poured out His Spirit in connexion with his labours, and great numbers were brought to the knowledge of the truth. At Bottesford, according to Mr. Herod, in his "Biographical Sketches," Mr. Benton was violently opposed. Some of the inhabitants were under the influence of the aristocratical and High Church party, and the lower orders of society were countenanced in all the low acts of opposition to Dissenters. As soon as Mr. Benton commenced worship in the open-air the bells of the church began to ring, dogs were set to fight, a great drum was beaten, and different instruments of music were played. The persecutors then assailed him with rotten eggs, filth, and stones. But the preacher stood unmoved at his post, the Holy Spirit accompanied his word, and many were convinced of the error of their way. He who beat the great drum followed the preacher to other places in order to annoy him; but at last he was brought to repentance, and became a very devoted and useful Christian. A large and flourishing society was formed at Bottesford, which has since become the head of a circuit.

At Cotgrave, the persecutors collected a number of kettles and pans and made as much noise as they could, in order to disturb Mr. Benton in his open-air worship; but he was nevertheless made the means of bringing many to the knowledge of the truth.

Mr. Benton visited Kinoulton on a Sabbath-day, and hundreds from the surrounding villages came to hear him. But a godless young man of the village, loosed a dangerous bull in order to drive it among the people, and prevent their hearing the preacher. He was however, disappointed in this wicked attempt, as the animal took a

quickly appeared again. Fewkes' cottage was held on the same tenure as that of his friend Vickerstaff's had been, and he was threatened that if he would not "turn those noisy people out," he should be treated like Vickerstaff. This threat was carried into execution; a discharge was sent, and next an ejectment,—and one evening, on returning from his labour as a husbandman, Fewkes found his house had been pulled down, and his wife and furniture thrown upon the high road! A home, however, was provided for him and his wife in the house of sympathising friends, and the pious pair ultimately suffered no loss.

The preaching was next removed to the dwelling of Matthew Woodward. His house stood in a garden, but was also "a parish house." Persecution followed the infant cause thither also. Woodward was threatened, and next brought before a bench of magistrates. He was unpolished in his manners, but possessed strong common sense and unflinching courage. In reply to the threats of the "higher powers," he said "Mine is a parish house, and if you turn me out of it you must find me another; and as soon as I get into that, I shall have the preaching there." One of the magistrates, forgetting his duty to God, and the conduct becoming his dignified station, now began to swear, for which Woodward administered a strong admonition, contrasting the profanity of the magistrate with the devout practices of his persecuted fellow-worshippers. He was then hastily dismissed, and returned home in triumph. The persecutors were now fairly outmatched; and they are reported to have said, "It is of no use tormenting ourselves with those incorrigible Ranters—we may pull half the village down, and not get them out at last." A change of stewards also took place about this time, and the new steward wisely pursued a different course from that of his predecessor.

Subsequently the society bought the waterman's floating chapel at Nottingham, took it down the river Trent, drew it into Woodward's garden, and there worshipped in it. Afterwards the owner of the little freehold land in the village sold them an eligible



building site, on which they erected a substantial brick chapel, where it stands as a trophy of religious liberty, and a monument of fervent and persevering piety.

Nottinghamshire offered a considerable amount of opposition and persecution to the first preachers of the Primitive Methodist Connexion; but in a comparatively short period it furnished flourishing churches, and greatly strengthened the community.

CHAPTER VIII.

Persecution at Oakham.—Mr. Wedgwood's imprisonment at Grantham.—Success at Leicester, Lincoln, and other places.—Progress of the work in South Staffordshire.—Loughborough made a Circuit.—Origin of Circuit Committees.—Commencement of a Magazine.—"Revivalists."

MUCH of the missionary work in Nottinghamshire, recorded in the foregoing chapter, was performed in 1817. In the same year, the missionary labours of the connexion appear to have been extended into Leicestershire, and into some parts of Lincolnshire and Rutlandshire. We have but little information respecting the progress of the mission in the last-mentioned county. Mr. Clowes visited Oakham, the county town, and "preached in the open-air to a well-behaved people," and was hospitably entertained for the night. He made arrangements for a preaching service in a fortnight following, hoping that success would crown the efforts of the missionaries there as elsewhere. But "the next preacher that attended Oakham had no sooner begun to preach than he was assailed with a terrible storm of persecution; and had he not taken to his heels, he would in all probability have been killed by the infuriated mob: it pursued him a considerable distance, but, taking a circuitous direction, he escaped without hurt. The next preacher that ventured to go had not long been engaged in the services before many of the rabble came up with a basket of eggs, and they became so exasperated that they dashed the basket and all the eggs together at the man of God, and then knocked him down, and threw themselves upon him. By the mercy of God, however, he got up, and made his escape."

We meet with no further information respecting missionary

labours at this place, and judge they were withdrawn through the violence of the persecution which the missionaries had to encounter.

No small measure of persecution attended the introduction of Primitive Methodism into Lincolnshire. Mr. John Wedgwood visited Grantham, and stood up to preach at the cross. But he was quickly apprehended by a constable, and thrust into prison. Mr. Lockwood, before mentioned, resolved to follow his example. He took Mr. Wedgwood's place at the cross, and was immediately apprehended, and brought before the magistrates, who made out his mittimus for imprisonment. He, however, entered into his own recognizances to appear at the quarter sessions; and Mr. Wedgwood then did the same. When the sessions arrived, they employed a counsellor to plead their cause; the verdict was given in their behalf, and their persecutors had to pay the expenses. Sir William Manners also took the part of the missionaries, and ordered a stone pulpit to be erected on his own ground near the market cross, whence they might without interruption proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. It is supposed that in this instance Sir William was influenced more by his antipathy to the magistrates at Grantham than by his love for evangelical truth, or his regard for religious liberty. Be this as it might, his protection of the missionaries awed the persecuting magistrates, and they ceased to oppose open-air preaching. A society was shortly afterwards formed, though it was not of long continuance; but according to the testimony of Mr. Sampson Turner, one of the first travelling preachers in the connexion, the imprisonment of Mr. Wedgwood was overruled for the furtherance of the gospel in the district. On his visit to Grantham, not long afterwards, he says, "A short time before Mr. John Wedgwood had been imprisoned for preaching the gospel in this town. This produced a great sensation throughout the country around, and awakened the sympathies of the people generally in behalf of the connexion, heretofore despised and persecuted." Some years afterwards, a permanent society was established at Grantham, of which a record will be found in a future chapter.

In other places in Lincolnshire, about this time, the missionaries suffered much persecution. Mr. John Hallsworth states, that when he first came into one part of the county in 1817—1818, he was almost continually in danger of losing his life while preaching. Mobs were raised against him at almost every place he visited; eggs, dirt, and stones were thrown at him, cocks were set to fight, bells were rung, and other similar plans adopted to annoy him, and disturb the services. But by patience and perseverance, this opposition was in time overcome, and societies were established, more particulars of which will be found in succeeding pages.

Messrs. Benton, Wedgwood, and Heath, appear to have been the first missionaries of the community employed in Leicestershire, where they met with less persecution than in the counties of Rutland and Lincoln, and were favoured with a large amount of success. Much good was effected at Loughborough, Coleorton, Whitwick, Markfield, Sileby, and numerous other places; many sinners were brought to God, and prosperous societies were formed. Mr. George Handford, a local preacher at Sileby, was the first preacher of the denomination who visited Syston, five miles from Leicester. Accompanied by a number of friends, he went thither on Sunday afternoon, January 18th, 1818, and sang through some parts of the village till he reached the green, where hundreds of persons were soon collected. During the service he was interrupted by a clergyman, a lawyer, and another gentleman. The clergyman with an assumption of great authority, ordered him "about his business," adding, "we won't have you here." But Mr. Handford knew the law of the land respecting preaching, better than either the clergyman or the lawyer—a wicked and profane man—and declined to relinquished his right to preach. After some conversation, in which the local preacher showed himself much superior to the professional divine and his friend the solicitor, the opponents left Mr. Handford in quiet possession of the field, and he delivered a discourse which was made a blessing to many. Among the results of this first service at Syston, were nvitations to visit Rearsby, Thurmaston, Leicester, and other

places, where the missionaries found an open door, and were made useful in the conversion of many sinners.

According to information received from Mr. John Brownson, the first service held by the Primitive Methodists in Leicester, was in the month of March, 1818. Mr. John Benton, accompanied by friends from Thurmaston and Syston, conducted the service at the cross in Belgrave Street, when great excitement was created, and much good effected. Mr. W. Goodrich, afterwards a respectable local preacher, commenced his religious course at that time. Henceforward open-air preaching was regularly conducted in different parts of the town, especially in Foundry Square, Orchard Street, Frog Island, and Infirmary Square. During one of the open-air services an inn-keeper entered his chaise, and for malicious purposes ordered the post-boy to drive through a congregation of thousands of persons, whom Mr. R. Winfield was earnestly addressing. The people wisely made a way for him to pass, and then stood close together as before; but for some time afterwards, when service was held in that place, which was not a thoroughfare, they took the precaution to fix ropes to certain posts, to prevent interruption by horses and carriages.

Mr. Clowes appears to have visited a few places in Leicestershire towards the close of 1817, and to have visited various other places in the county sometime afterwards, probably in the spring or summer of 1818. From Oakham, in Rutlandshire, he went to Melton Mowbray, in Leicestershire, where, on his arrival, he found that Mr. Wedgwood had just been preaching, and had gone to a village three miles distant. Mr. Clowes followed him thither, and preached in the street. "When I had proceeded about half way through my discourse," says he, "a man on horseback, with a drawn sword in his hand, storming and threatening, rode up among the people, and vowed to take vengeance on the preacher; but the people checked him in his advance by drawing close round me. He made repeated efforts to force his way through, but failed; so I received no harm. We held a prayer-meeting in a house after preaching; and notwithstanding the persecutors raged,

and threw dung and stones upon us, yet in the name of the Lord we lifted up our banners."

After describing the persecutions at Oakham, before mentioned, he continues: "A short time after these transactions we held a camp-meeting at Packman Lane; some thousands of people attended; the preachers had great freedom in addressing them, and it was a most blessed meeting. In the evening Wedgwood and I went to Sileby, and held a lovefeast in a barn; the people spoke freely of the dealings of God with their souls, and I had the happiness to hear from the lips of several that my labours were not in vain in the Lord. The next day at one o'clock I preached in the open air to a well-behaved and strongly affected people. Brother Wedgwood and I then pushed on to Barrow wake, and we both preached apart, but first sang through the streets, and the multitudes accompanied us. We continued the open air service until ten, by which time it was dark; but the people were so much affected by the power of God that they would not disperse. We therefore preached again in the open air, and had another glorious time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We then preached our way to Nottingham, and back again to Sileby, where we saw the arm of God made bare and Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

"On Sunday we held a camp-meeting at Croxton-lane-ends, near Barsbay; here the word of God prevailed, and many experienced the converting power. From this place we went to Leicester the same evening. The next morning we hoisted the gospel standard in Belgrave Gate, and it is supposed that two thousand persons were gathered together on the occasion. Wedgwood preached from Job xxii. 21, and I from Rev. iii. 20. Just as I was rising to address the congregation a person whispered in my ear that an alderman and one of the magistrates were present; but I had no fear on that account. I felt my soul impressed with a consciousness of [the presence of] higher powers, the value of immortal souls, and the necessity of crying aloud and sparing not, regardless of the trifling distinctions of earthly rank and power.



e multitude were exceedingly well-behaved, a deep solemnity gned throughout, and all were as still and quiet as if we had en in a chapel. We terminated our proceedings about twelve lock, and at half-past one we held a prayer-meeting at a friend's use in Orchard Street. The gathering was very numerous; vast mbers stood outside. Many were powerfully affected and cried · pardoning mercy, and it was supposed that about twenty found e Lord. The prayer-meeting continued till six o'clock in the ening. When I came out of the house my clothes were as wet thatch on a rainy day; but after taking a cup of tea we walked ren miles to Sileby, though we were much exhausted on the way. ter breakfast next morning, we left Sileby and walked seventeen les, when we took leave of each other, that we might preach at fferent places."

The impression made by the zealous missionaries upon the mbler classes in this large manufacturing town, and the manner which their efforts were regarded by men of different minds, ay be gathered from the following quotations. In a letter to a end, dated Leicester, June 30th, 1821, a great man writes, "The nters have bawled themselves out of breath in this neighbour-od, and I think are losing ground. They have got chapels, and e neglecting field preaching. We mean to take it up. They ve chanted till the people take no more notice of their noise than the Quakers' stillness. They want discipline. Their societies e not pure." So wrote the Rev. Daniel Isaac, Wesleyan minis-r, then stationed at Leicester, as appears from his life by Mr. verett. The language excites our risibilities and almost provokes few observations in reply, but we check ourselves. The good an has since departed to a better world, and were he to visit rth again he would speak about his fellow Christians in a differ-nt strain. A far greater man than he, the Rev. Robert Hall, en also resident at Leicester, evinced more catholicity of spirit, nd expressed more liberal views. It is said, that when on his ay to a country place at which he occasionally preached on week-y evenings, he listened attentively to the preaching of John

Benton, and admired his earnestness and the command he had over his congregation. An individual who felt annoyed with the proceedings of the zealous missionaries, said to Mr. Hall, "What do you think of the Ranters, Sir? Don't you think they ought to be put down?" "I don't know enough of their conduct to say that. What do they do? Do they inculcate Antinomianism, or do they exhibit immorality in their lives?" "Not that I know of, but they indulge in very irregular practices." "Indeed! what practices?" "Why, Sir, when they enter a village they begin to sing hymns, and they go on singing till they collect a number of people about them on the village green, or in some neighbouring field, and then they preach." "Well, whether that may be *prudent* or *expedient*, or not, depends upon circumstances; but, as yet, I see no criminality." "But you *must* admit, Mr. Hall, that it is very *irregular*." "And suppose I do admit that, what follows? Was not our Lord's rebuking the Scribes and Pharisees, and driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple *very irregular?* Was not almost all that He did in His public ministry *very irregular?* Was not the course of the apostles, and of Stephen, and of many of the evangelists *very irregular?* Were not the proceedings of Calvin, Luther, and their fellow-workers in the Reformation *very irregular?*—A complete and shocking innovation upon all the quiescent doings of the Papists? And were not the whole lives of Whitfield and Wesley *very irregular* lives, as you view such things? Yet how infinitely is the world indebted to all these! No, Sir, there must be something widely different from mere irregularity before I condemn." This great man was not ashamed to countenance the humble and zealous missionaries, and on one occasion lent his chapel for one of them in whih to preach a funeral sermon. Himself also attended the service, and was much delighted with it.

An old chapel, formerly occupied by the Wesleyans, was taken on rent, for the use of the newly-formed society. Much good was done therein; but efforts were soon made to erect a new one, to meet the wants of the rising cause. A site of land in George-



reet, twenty-one yards square, was procured, and the building as speedily commenced. The pecuniary resources of the friends ere limited, but their diligence and zeal in the enterprise were traordinary. They visited every brick-yard in the neighbourood, and for every thousand bricks they ordered they begged a ousand. S. Day, Esq., of Thurmaston, a somewhat eccentric ntleman, was solicited to give a donation. In keeping with his eculiarities, he replied, "I will give you a large ash tree that is t down and lies on my estate, on condition you will draw it to eicester with human strength." The condition was accepted; a umber of members and friends met at Thurmaston, the tree was laced on a pair of wheels used on such occasions, and then drawn the front of Mr Day's house. There one of the preachers got pon it, and preached an extemporaneous sermon to the assembly om the appropriate words, "Now also the axe is laid unto the oot of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth ood fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." The service ver, the tree was drawn to Leicester, a distance of three miles, nd sold for £7, with which some plain windows were bought for he chapel. The building was twenty-one yards long, and fourteen wide; a great undertaking for poor people but recently rought to the knowledge of the truth; but the interest they took n the matter was some compensation for their lack of wealth. The late Mr John Briggs and others watched the walls by night uring the erection, to prevent them being thrown down by mischievous persons opposed to the cause. Successive difficulties ere overcome through the faith and prayers and united efforts of he people, and the new chapel was opened for worship on Christmas-day, 1819, by Mr. James Bourne, to the no small joy of the ociety, who regarded their new sanctuary with more satisfaction han a nobleman does his mansion, or a sovereign his palace.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and many other places in Leicestershire, ppear to have been successfully visited during the summer of 818. Ashby was first visited by Mr. John Harrison, who met vith a kind reception; and he was probably the first missionary

who visited several other places in the county. About the time that Mr. Harrison visited Ashby, Mr. John Benton lost his voice at a large camp-meeting near Leicester, and his labours as a Primitive Methodist missionary terminated. He never afterwards appeared on any Preachers' Plan in the connexion, though he survived the loss of his voice a number of years. From his formal union with the connexion in the autumn of 1813 to the close of his labours in 1818, a period of nearly five years, he was very successful in missionary labours, and, under God, was a means of considerably enlarging the connexion's field of operations. He died a few years ago, but we are unable to furnish any information respecting his last hours.

About the period of the above-named camp-meeting, Messrs. Clowes and Wedgwood extended their missionary labours into other parts of Lincolnshire than had yet been visited. "Brother Wedgwood soon joined me again," says Mr. Clowes, "and we went to Willingore, in Lincolnshire, to conduct a camp-meeting." At this camp-meeting many sinners were "pricked in their hearts," and called upon God for mercy, while numerous persecutors did all they could to throw the meeting into confusion, and to interrupt the services. Great good, however, was effected. Mr. Clowes preached in the street in the evening, and then held a prayer-meeting in a private house, which was continued until morning, many sinners seeking the Lord in the disquietude of their souls.

Shortly afterwards the same two missionaries visited the city of Lincoln. They preached as usual in the open air, between the cathedral and the jail. They began at nine o'clock in the morning, and concluded about nine in the evening. Some of their godless persecutors procured a goat, which they sent in among the people, at the same time shouting loudly and casting dust into the air. But the congregation maintained their ground; the missionaries proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation with undiminished power and unction; multitudes were deeply affected, and many were turned to the Lord. While Mr. Clowes was preaching in this

city, probably at this great meeting, a stone was thrown at him, which cut him in the face, and made the blood flow; and the meekness with which he bore the insult, and prayed for him who committed it, was the means of the conversion of one of the bystanders.

"The day after the Lincoln meeting," says Mr. Clowes, "we pushed on to Waddington, a village about four miles from the city, and preached in the open-air to a vast congregation; when most of the heads of the town attended. We were kindly received by a farmer, who had been at the Lincoln meeting the day before, who lent us a waggon in which to stand to address the people. We had great freedom in preaching to the assembled multitudes a present, full, and free salvation, by faith in the blood of the Lamb, in the presence of the clergyman, and rich and poor." They afterwards held a powerful prayer-meeting in the farmer's house.

Towards the close of the year, missionary efforts were also extended to Gainsborough, and some neighbouring places in the northern portions of Lincolnshire. Messrs. W. Braithwaite and T. Saxton visited Gainsborough in the month of December, 1818, and preached first in the market-place. Mr. Braithwaite subsequently opened the places which were formed into Scotter circuit, of which a more particular account will be given in a succeeding chapter.

Whilst the missionaries were thus successfully enlarging the borders of the connexion in the counties of Nottingham, Lincoln, and Leicester, the work of God was also spreading in South Staffordshire. Mr. Sampson Turner, before mentioned, to whom we are indebted for the following information, had been converted at Cannock Lane, in 1812, and he and others were a few years afterwards sent to visit Pelsall, Brownhills, Walsall Wood, and other places. The late Mr. W. Carter, of Darlaston, in the mining district of South Staffordshire, happened to be present on one occasion at Walsall Wood, and invited the preachers to come to preach in his large room. A few Sabbaths afterwards, the invitation was complied with, and Messrs. Carter, Humpage, and

a few others, (and soon afterwards, Mr. D. Bowen,) united with the society. The opening of Bilston, Wolverhampton, and other neighbouring places in this populous district, we shall have to narrate in a succeeding chapter.

The extension of missionary labours in Nottingham circuit, and the lack of sufficient attention to pecuniary matters, produced a degree of temporal embarrassment, which loudly called for remedial measures. Tunstall circuit had kindly rendered considerable assistance; but other means were requisite to afford effectual relief. The subject was discussed with becoming seriousness and solicitude at the September quarterly meeting of Nottingham circuit, and two principal measures were adopted. Loughborough was made the head of a new circuit, thus relieving the mother circuit from the burden of supporting Loughborough part of it, and a committee of intelligent and efficient brethren was appointed to devise such means as might be deemed requisite for effecting permanent relief. The brethren in question applied themselves to the work with zeal and diligence; and through the divine blessing on their efforts, and with the co-operation of the societies, they happily succeeded in accomplishing their object. At the following Quarterly Meeting it was found "that the circuit, through the exertions of the committee, was beginning greatly to recover itself. And their attention to general concerns had been so valuable and useful to the circuit, that every one saw the propriety and necessity of appointing a committee for the like purpose, for the ensuing quarter. This was the origin of circuit committees," which subsequently became an essential part of the executive of the connexion.

Ere we close our account of the year 1818, we must mention the attempt to establish a Connexional Magazine, and a few other circumstances of importance. Mr. H. Bourne appears to have taken the lead in the effort to establish a *quarterly* magazine, and to have borne the pecuniary responsibility of the undertaking. A number was accordingly issued in an humble form, edited by Mr. Bourne, well adapted for the persons for whom it was intended, and calculated to promote their benefit. It did not,

however, defray the expense of publication, and Mr. Bourne made up the deficiency. Before the close of the year, a person in Loughborough circuit strongly urged the propriety of issuing a *monthly* magazine, and by plausible arguments prevailed upon Mr. Bourne to seek the accomplishment of this desirable object. Mr. Bourne sought the sanction and co-operation of several official meetings, and then began to make preparation for publishing the first number at the commencement of 1819. From the preface to the magazine for 1841, we learn that "a person at Leicester" edited the first eight numbers.

While Mr. Bourne was laudably engaged in this effort to promote the instruction and benefit of the connexion by the press, Mr. Clowes and others were nobly employed in extending its borders by laborious missionary exertions. From March to June, 1818, we find the following note on the printed plans of the circuits: "brother W. Clowes during this quarter is chiefly to be employed in missionary labours." And near the end of the year an opening was presented for an enlarged sphere of usefulness, in which Mr. C's success will necessarily claim our notice in succeeding chapters. A Mr. Woolhouse, of Hull, in Yorkshire, had become acquainted with some of the friends at Nottingham, and been deeply interested and profited at some of the public services he had attended in the large preaching room. He had also heard Mr. Clowes preach in the open-air at Leicester, in the summer of 1818, and urged him to undertake a mission to Hull. Mrs. Woolhouse, and a few other zealous friends, were much interested in the reports which Mr. W. conveyed respecting the work of God among the Primitive Methodists at Nottingham and elsewhere; and at the December quarterly meeting of Nottingham circuit, a deputation from Hull requested the appointment of a missionary for that town. Mr. R. Winfield was appointed to this station; but Mr. Hugh Bourne had preferred several charges against him, and his mind was unsettled. Instead of going to Hull according to arrangements, he went into Leicestershire, made a division in the society, and became the founder of a new

denomination. He and his followers were called "Revivalists." They sang the same hymns and tunes as the Primitive Methodists, preached the same doctrines, and greatly resembled them in their mode of worship. Several zealous preachers were raised up among them; they visited divers counties in a short period, and met with considerable success in the conversion of sinners. But Mr. Winfield lacked prudence and perseverance. His looseness in discipline, and his inattention to important matters connected with the societies, proved his utter unfitness for the onerous position he had chosen to occupy. His incapacity was soon apparent. His societies one after another declined, and in the course of eight or nine years, his community became extinct. He afterwards became a local preacher in the Methodist New Connexion, and has since departed, we trust, to a better world. His connection with the Primitive Methodists was not long, being only two or three years at most; but during its continuance, he was useful in missionary labours.

It was well, however, for the connexion, and for the cause of God in general, that he did not go to Hull as a Primitive Methodist missionary, as his refusing to go, led to the appointment of an incomparably superior man, whose uncommon success greatly extended the kingdom of Christ, and promoted the welfare of multitudes of souls. When Mr. Winfield declined going to Hull, a special meeting was convened at Nottingham to consult about the best measures to be adopted in the emergency. Mr. Clowes was regarded as eminently adapted for the contemplated mission, but he did not belong to Nottingham circuit, and therefore was not under the jurisdiction of the meeting. As, however, the quarterly meeting of Tunstall circuit, to which Mr. Clowes belonged, was appointed to meet on the following Monday, it was agreed to request that meeting to favour Nottingham circuit with the services of Mr. Clowes, that he might open a mission at Hull. A deputation was appointed to the Tunstall quarterly meeting to carry out this measure. The request was kindly granted, and in the next chapter we shall find Mr. Clowes engaged in his eminently successful labours at Hull.

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. CLOWES sent to Hull.—Several towns in Lincolnshire visited.—Mr. CLOWES visits York and other places.—Progress of Nottingham Circuit.—Imprisonment of Messrs. ATTERBY and GILBERT at Bolsover.—Progress of Loughborough Circuit.—Brutal treatment of Mr. JOHN GARNER.—Progress of Tunstall Circuit.—South Staffordshire, and many parts of Cheshire.—Preparatory meeting at Nottingham.

WE now enter upon a year (1819) of greater prosperity and enlargement than the connexion had heretofore experienced. Missionary operations on an extensive scale were carried on in various counties of England. We begin with Mr. Clowes' mission to Hull as being first in the order of time, and as intimately connected with the close of the foregoing chapter. He arrived at Hull on the 15th of January, and met with a joyful reception at the house of Mr. Woolhouse afore-mentioned. The celebrated "Johnny Oxtoby" was present; and as soon as Mr. Clowes entered the house, Mrs. Woolhouse and "Johnny" knelt down and returned thanks for his safe arrival. This act of simple piety, however fanatical and objectionable it may be deemed by certain persons who are afraid of being "righteous overmuch," would be far more refreshing to Mr. Clowes than a profusion of empty compliments. It well accorded with the feelings of his heart, oppressed with the tremendous responsibility of his momentous enterprise, and yet glowing with gratitude to Almighty God for the favour shown him in being sent as a messenger of mercy to a town in which he had formerly been distinguished by his intemperance and recklessness. "This act of devotion," he says, "was very encouraging to me, and became a prelude to greater things.

On the very day of my entering Hull I preached in an old factory in North-street. Vast numbers of people attended, many influenced by curiosity, having heard of the arrival of the 'Ranter preacher,' others with the intention to create disturbance; however, God was present in my first effort to make known the riches of his mercy, and the wicked were restrained, so the meeting terminated in peace and quiet." The spirit in which Mr. Clowes entered upon his work in this town will appear from the subjoined extract: "On the day following I took a walk down to the pottery, by the Humber side, where I had worked upwards of fifteen years before, when I was in the old olive tree, which is wild by nature. I found the working of the pottery had been discontinued. I, however, entered the place, and proceeded to the room in which I formerly laboured, and kneeled down and praised God for the great change he had wrought in me. I then returned, and took a walk up and down the streets and lanes in which I had formerly wrought folly and wickedness. It brought to my recollection the time and place of my capture by the press-gang, and other circumstances of dissipation and riot. O what gratitude filled my soul when indulging in the contrast! Instead of being employed in reckless and brutal conduct, throwing the reins upon my passions, neither fearing God nor regarding man, I was now a sinner saved by grace, and a missionary of the cross."

On the following Sabbath morning, he preached again in the old factory, to a large congregation, and had a "time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." In the afternoon, J. Brown, who had been sent from Nottingham to supply at Hull for a few weeks, preached with acceptance. In the evening Mr. Clowes preached again, and afterwards organized a society, comprising two classes, among whom was Mr. S. Atterby, afterwards a useful travelling preacher.

On the Tuesday following he went to Hessle, a village about five miles from Hull, where he preached, and also formed a society with the prospect of success. From Hessle, he proceeded, accom-

panied by Mr. John Oxtoby, to Swanland, Elloughton, Brantingham, Ellerker, South and North Cave: in all these places he addressed vast multitudes; sometimes in the open-air, but generally in barns, for it was in the winter season. The word of the Lord proved quick and powerful; many were convinced and converted; and at each place he formed a society, and "established principles of discipline in conformity with those of the connexion."

Returning to Hull, on Sunday, February 14th, he preached again in the old factory to a great multitude; and though the wicked greatly annoyed the worshippers, no bodily injury was sustained. On the night following he preached again, and the presence of God was felt in the midst. Persecutors, however, rushed in upon the assembly like a flood, and made such disturbances, that it was deemed prudent to close the meeting before the usual period. On the following evening, Tuesday, 16th, he held a meeting in the upper part of the town, where he also met with similar annoyances as on the Monday evening. Whilst conducting the service, the wicked were very boisterous; on the outside they threw down a wall, and produced much noise and disturbance. Several persons, however, were convinced of sin, and two gave in their names in order to become members of society.

On the 21st, Mr. Clowes preached three times in the old factory at Hull, and was graciously assisted from on high. But the persecutors were very violent, and so alarmed the congregation that at one time they imagined the building was about to fall, and they attempted to make their escape from the place. At this crisis, the scene was indescribable; some persons were forcing their way to the door, some were crying for help, and others were jumping out of the windows. But, as the building was only one story high, no person was seriously injured. At the evening service the police were obtained to guard the door, and to keep out the most furious portion of the rabble. These, however, shouted and bellowed tremendously, and threw stones and broke the windows. But the Lord graciously worked in the congrega-

tion, and many of the sailors who had joined in the persecution, were brought to the feet of Jesus as humble penitents, and became zealous disciples.

On application being made to the mayor for protection against these distressing disturbances, it was readily afforded; three of the persecutors were imprisoned, and the rest were restrained by this proper exercise of judicial authority.

On Sunday, March 7th, Mr. Clowes conducted the first love-feast at Hull. The excitement in the surrounding country was so great, that some persons came nearly twenty miles in order to attend it. The lovefeast was a very powerful one; many blessed God for what their eyes had seen; and others praised Him for having mercifully sent the missionaries to Hull. In the evening Mr. Clowes preached, when hundreds were unable to obtain admission. The spirit of hearing still increased, and the fields were white for the harvest; and Mr. Clowes daily agonised with God in prayer for more labourers to be thrust out.

At the March quarterly meeting of Nottingham circuit, Mr. Clowes successfully pleaded for additional missionaries, and was cheered by the appointment of the excellent John Harrison and his wife, the former of whom, after a short and exemplary course, terminated his labours, and entered upon his reward. Strengthened by the timely assistance considerately afforded, Mr. Clowes now enlarged the borders of the mission. He and Mr. Harrison crossed the Humber to Barrow, in Lincolnshire; and preached in the open-air to a numerous company, some of whom invited them to visit the place again and form a society, which they did soon afterwards. They both visited Barton, and stood up in the market-place and were divinely assisted in announcing their message of mercy.

On the same side of the Humber Mr. Clowes also visited other villages. At Ulceby such weeping was manifested in his audience as he hoped would never be forgotten. At Limber he preached in the open-air, and one soul was brought to the Lord. At East Halton, Goxhill, and Ferriby, the work of God broke out



gloriously; excellent societies were formed, and scriptural discipline established among them.

Crossing the Humber again, Mr. Clowes proceeded to visit some fresh places on the Yorkshire side. At Newbald he preached in a wheelwright's shop, to a rude and disorderly assembly, and held a prayer-meeting in a house. He then visited Brough and Brantingham again, and preached abroad. At the latter place, the clergyman was much opposed to the missionaries, and when Mr. Clowes was preaching he advanced among the people with a menacing attitude; but when he got within two yards of the preacher he suddenly turned to the right and walked off. At another village Mr. C. preached to a miserable congregation, and met a class of four persons. The next day he went to River Bridge, and preached in the open-air to a vast assembly. Here the arm of the Lord was made bare, sinners were saved, and a christian church was formed. He then pushed forward to Melbourne, Thorganby, Weldrake, and Elvington; at all which places the grace of God came down upon the people like rain upon the mown grass, and great good was effected.

Mr. Clowes having now nearly reached the ancient city of York, resolved to visit it in his capacity as a home missionary. He accordingly went thither, and sent a message to the city crier, that a "Ranter" preacher would preach in the Pavement, near the centre of the city; but on the crier sending him information that he durst not make the announcement unless the sanction of the Lord-mayor were obtained, Mr. Clowes felt he was placed in difficulties. He thought that if he waited upon his lordship he would probably refuse permission, and that if he should preach after a denial, he should probably be sent to prison. He could not, however, conscientiously pass by the city without preaching in it; and he therefore prudently determined to make the attempt to preach without soliciting permission to do so. On Monday evening, May 4th, 1819, he carried out his determination. He stood up in the Pavement, near the market-place, looking to his Divine master for help and a blessing on his effort. A considerable

congregation surrounded him, most of whom listened with attention to his earnest address. At the close of the service, he told the people his name and employment, and informed them that he should preach there again in a fortnight. On a subsequent occasion he preached in the Thursday market to thousands of people, all of whom listened to the word with the deepest attention. He had great liberty in speaking, and the meeting ended satisfactorily. Soon afterwards a room was taken, and a society formed. North Duffield, Osgodby, Market Weighton, and other places in the neighbourhood, were successfully visited about this time.

While Mr. Clowes was thus successfully employed in Yorkshire, his excellent colleague, Mr. Harrison, was labouring with much encouragement on the Lincolnshire side of the Humber. He visited Market Rasen, Middle Rasen, Caistor, and numerous other places. In his journal, as given by Mr. Herod, in his "Biographical Sketches," he says, "May 19th, I preached at this place [Market Rasen] to a great congregation, and formed a society; eight gave in their names. The next day I went to Middle Rasen, and preached under a hedge, and the people heard the word attentively. A man opened his house for a prayer-meeting, and the people evinced their hearty reception of us." On the 21st, he and another person went to Caistor. After the bell-man had announced, "There will be a Ranter's meeting held this evening in the middle of the market-place," there was great excitement among the inhabitants, who ran to the spot from all quarters. "I borrowed a chair for a pulpit," says Mr. Harrison, "and carried it into the middle of the market-place, and commenced worship. Whilst I was preaching the people were as still as if I had been promising them an earthly inheritance on terms of their obedience that night. There were three clergymen and a dissenting minister present, who acknowledged that out-door services might be effectual to the salvation of many souls, who would not attend either church or chapel." "May 22nd," he continues, "we went to Nettleton, near Caistor. I



preached in the open-air, and held a prayer-meeting after. Several cried aloud for mercy, and some professed to receive the remission of sins." On the following Sabbath, Mr. Harrison preached with effect at Market Rasen and Middle Rasen. On the subsequent Tuesday evening he met with considerable interruption in the Market-place at Market Rasen. "Some of the enemies of the cross," he says, "commenced throwing shot at me; others sticks, others stones, one of which came in the direction of my head, but fell before it reached me. The clergyman gave orders for the bells to be rung, in order that my voice might not be heard. The stir, however, was a means of increasing my congregations. Many were deeply affected, and I concluded in peace." On Sunday, May 30th, Messrs. Clowes and Harrison, assisted by others, held the first camp-meeting at Hull, when thousands of persons attended. The weather proved unfavourable during some parts of the day, so that the meeting could not be conducted without intermission. Several services were therefore held in different parts of the town, at which many sinners cried for mercy, and obtained peace through believing. During the week, Mr. Clowes was employed in giving society tickets to the members at Hull, already amounting to about 160 in number. Such was the prosperity of the mission to this town and the district, that they were made into a separate circuit at the June quarterly meeting of Nottingham circuit, in six months or less from the time of Mr. Clowes commencing his missionary labours here, having three travelling preachers, about three hundred members, and a reasonable prospect of the circuit supporting itself. So had the word of the Lord run and been glorified.

Other parts of Nottingham circuit also experienced considerable prosperity during this period, and its borders were enlarged in Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, and some parts of Yorkshire, bordering on Sheffield and Barnsley. Bolsover, in Derbyshire, acquired unenviable notoriety by the persecutions which several of the missionaries suffered there, two of whom, at least,—the late excellent Messrs. Atterby and Gilbert—were apprehended and

cast into prison. The former says, "I went with Mr. Clowes to Nottingham quarter-day [March, 1819], and was regularly taken out to travel, and sent into the Retford Mission. In this mission I suffered imprisonment at Bolsover, in Derbyshire. Eight days after I was taken into custody at Tickhill, in Yorkshire. Many persecutions I endured for Christ's sake, but out of them all the Lord delivered me." "The first Sabbath on which I opened my ministry among the Primitive Methodists," says Mr. Gilbert, "which was May 18th, 1819, at Bolsover, in Derbyshire, I was taken up and cast into prison." But despite of this cruel and wicked opposition, the work of the Lord prospered surprisingly, and multitudes were brought to Christ in the different branches and missions of the Nottingham circuit.

During the spring and summer of this year, the two missionaries who had been sent to Gainsborough, as noticed in our last chapter, extended their labours with great success. Mr. Braithwaite visited Scotter and the adjacent villages. "The way opened wonderfully; the country was moved for miles round, and many were converted to the Lord." From a copy of Scotter circuit plan for 1819 we find that Gainsborough, Epworth, Scotter, Kirton, West Ferry, East Ferry, Messingham, Willoughton, Blyton, Laughton, Wildsworth, Stockwith, Springthorpe, Northorpe, Corringham, Morton, Scotton, Butterwick, Burringham, Flixbro', Crosby, Hibaldstow, North Kelsey, South Kelsey, Waddingham, Bp. Norton, Haxey, and other places, were regularly supplied with preaching. A camp-meeting was held on Hardwick Hill, on the 13th of June, at which thousands of persons were present; and ere the year closed a chapel was erected at Scotter, one at West Ferry, and one at Kirton.

Loughborough circuit, at the same time, was also zealously employed in missionary operations, and some of its missionaries had to endure the most brutal persecution. The late Mr. John Garner says, "In February, 1819, I commenced my itinerant labours in the Loughborough circuit. During the month of May I visited Sow, near Coventry. At this place we had preached



several times, but to little purpose, the inhabitants being vile persecutors, and the parish clergyman conducting himself towards us in so vile a manner, that prudence forbids its being published. No sooner had I entered the village than stones were flying in every direction. I made haste to the house of Mr. ——, where a few people were assembled to hear the word of life. The mob followed me, surrounded the house, broke the windows, and compelled me to stop the meeting. Seeing no probability of the persecution abating, I was necessitated to expose myself to the malicious rage of the wicked, by whom I was furiously driven out of the village, with stones, rotten eggs, sludge, or whatever came first to hand. The friends who accompanied me seeing the madness of the mob, became afraid, and endeavoured to effect their escape by taking a footpath. The rebels followed me out of the village, and some of them seized me; others propped my mouth open with stones, while some were engaged in attempting to pour sludge down my throat. The cry was raised, 'Kill the devil! d—n him!' Immediately a man knocked me down, and after I had been shamefully beaten with the hands and feet of my enemies, and with divers weapons, I was dragged to a pond, around which they gathered, hoping soon to be gratified with my death. At this juncture of time I had not even a faint hope of ever being rescued from them alive; hence, I committed my body and soul to the Lord, and most earnestly wished for death to put an end to my sufferings, which were almost insupportable. However, 'the thoughts of the Lord are not as our thoughts, neither are his ways as our ways,' for, contrary to my expectations, he made a way for my escape. One of the vilest persecutors rescued me from the fury of his companions; and some of them pursued my friends, who had at first escaped. Thus the rebels were withdrawn from me. After having walked a few hundred yards, I perceived a woman much affected, tears were rolling down her cheeks; she kindly invited me into her house, and then assisted in washing my head and face. Being somewhat recovered, through the hospitality of my hostess, I ventured, with the assist-

ance of a friend to walk to Bell Green, a distance of perhaps two miles; and by my kind friends at this place I was cordially entertained and taken care of. They lent me what clothes I wanted; for my persecutors had also torn my clothes, of a portion of which they afterwards made a scarecrow. After being carefully nursed at Bell Green a few days, I was enabled to attend my usual labour."

Tunstall circuit was also prospering, and enlarging its borders in different directions. Early in this year the missionaries visited Macclesfield, and a society was soon raised. (See the Mag. for 1819, page 230.) Mr. Hugh Bourne, Mr. Clowes, Mr. Crawfoot, and others, had visited and preached at Macclesfield nine or ten years before this, but no Primitive Methodist society was then formed, these early labours being exercised in connection with another society, with some of whose members an acquaintance had been formed at the Mow camp-meetings. Macclesfield is about nineteen miles north of Tunstall; and while Tunstall circuit was carrying on missionary operations there, it was also succeeding in an opposite direction in the mining district of South Staffordshire; Darlaston and the district being made into a separate branch.

The following statements by Mr. Sampson Turner will show the reception which some of the early missionaries met with in this locality:—"We had already opened Darlaston, Pelsall, and Walsall Wood, and I was appointed to open Bilston, Wolverhampton, Willenhall, and other places. In March, 1819, I commenced my missionary labours at Bilston, on a Monday evening, on an open space near the centre of the town, and was soon surrounded by a number of people who behaved with great decorum, heard me with attention, and received the word with evident approval. My accommodations, however, for the night were not of the most satisfactory kind. I was put into a small room in a common lodging-house, among pedlars, tinkers, and chimney-sweeps, and was glad to make my exit early next morning. I spent part of the next day in company with some kind

christian friends of another community, and then went to Wolverhampton, where I preached in the evening, in the market place. I met with no annoyance till towards the conclusion of the service, when some persons began to make a savage noise and to insult and buffet me. A Mr. William Griffith, however, interposed, rescued me from my persecutors, and took me to his residence at the south-west end of the town; but the mob followed us all the way, using angry words, and heaping abusive epithets upon me. By the good providence of God I escaped without material injury, and Mr. Griffith kindly entertained me for the night. On the Wednesday I met with no better reception at Willenhall. When I began to sing a number of savage-looking persons commenced to stone me, so that I was obliged to depart; and they stoned me through the place. I proceeded thence to New Invention, where I met with civility and kindness." But whatever opposition certain persons of the baser sort might raise against the humble missionaries, this was not characteristic of the majority of the inhabitants of this district, many of whom "heard the word with all readiness of mind," and not a few believed and were saved. Since then a large chapel has been built even at Willenhall, and a flourishing society established.

The circuit was also largely extending itself west of Tunstall, into a large portion of Cheshire. A few places in this county, Englesea Brook, Weston, Coppenhall, &c., had been visited many years before, and societies established thereat which still continued. Messrs. Clowes and Wedgwood also held a camp-meeting at Nantwich, soon after the formation of a society at Englesea Brook; but the town does not appear to have been regularly supplied with preaching till several years afterwards. Mr. John Wedgwood was instrumental in extending the work further into the county. The excitement produced by his preaching and labours was immense. Multitudes with death-like stillness hung upon his lips at numerous places; the spirit of grace and supplication was largely poured out, and great numbers were made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The following account from Mr. Sampson Turner, who for a time was associated with Mr. Wedgwood in his Missionary labours in Cheshire, will corroborate the above statements :—

"On Sunday, May 23rd, 1819, I preached at Wood Green, where I had preached with much success fifteen months before. I was glad to find that most of those who had then been converted under my ministry still held fast their integrity. On this Sabbath the Lord gave me another soul for my hire. During the week I preached eight times, renewed the society tickets, and admitted nearly twenty persons into church-fellowship.

"On Sunday, May 30th, I attended a camp-meeting at Dunkirk Works, near Northwich, at which 2,000 persons were supposed to be present, among whom much good was done. I spoke nine times during the week, and on the following Sabbath (June 6th) I attended a camp-meeting at Bartington Heath. Great crowds flocked to the meeting from all parts, and it was evident that many deep impressions were made. Though much was said in this neighbourhood about our eccentric proceedings, the people were constrained to admit that the Lord was with us.

"On Monday, June 7th, I crossed the forest of Delamere to the neighbourhood of Tarporley, and entered upon a new mission, commenced by Mr. John Wedgwood. I spoke in the evening in a farm-house yard, when several persons professed to get good to their souls.

"On Tuesday, June 8th, I spoke in the street at Peckforton, when the Lord made bare his arm in a wonderful manner; there was a great cry for mercy, and many were saved.

"Wednesday, June 9th, I preached at Beeston, in the open-air. Some persons were much affected, but others mocked, and spoke evil of the way.

"Thursday, June 10th, I spoke at Tiverton, in a farm-house yard, and the service will not soon be forgotten.

"Friday, June 11th, I went to Chorley Green where Mr. John Wedgwood was preaching out of doors. The Lord was graciously present, and souls were crying for mercy on every side; and



eight or ten persons were made happy. We met again at Peckforton, where brother Wedgwood preached. The congregation was large, and many received the truth in love, and found salvation. An extraordinary awakening now took place in a great number of villages and hamlets, among which were Burland, Chorley Green, Egerton Green, Egerton Bank, Eaton, Tiverton Huxley, Spurstow, Burwardsley, Bookley, Beeston, Peckforton, Hobhill, Tushingham, &c. During this great awakening we preached two or three times almost every day. Great crowds assembled to hear the word of life, and loud and bitter cries for mercy were heard from both male and female, young and old. Their convictions were occasionally attended with convulsions, which lasted for hours. Whatever may be thought of these outward circumstances, the genuine character of the work among many was proved by the fruits it produced in reformation of life and obedience to the gospel. On Monday, June 28th, 1819, I left this fruitful scene of labour, in which I had formed a goodly number of societies, and admitted nearly 100 members." The societies at Burland, Chorley, and other places in the neighbourhood were probably not formed till three or four months later.

This enlargement of the respective circuits called for additional disciplinary regulations. "As the connexion was rising and increasing very rapidly," says Mr. H. Bourne, "an enlargement of discipline was found necessary, in order to preserve the unity of the connexion, and promote a proper variety and exchange among the travelling preachers. And it being the opinion of all the circuits that it had become necessary to hold general annual meetings, a preparatory meeting was held at Nottingham, in August 1819, to make arrangements for a regular annual meeting or yearly conference for the whole connexion." From a copy of the minutes made at this meeting, we learn that it commenced on Tuesday, August 10th, and "continued by adjournments till the Saturday evening following." It appears to have been composed of fifteen persons: Hugh and James Bourne, delegates from Tunstall circuit; Thomas King, Thomas Simmons, W. Guy, Samuel Bailey,



James Rudd, and David Musson Jackson, from Nottingham circuit; Joseph Skevington, George Hanford, William North, and William Goodrich, from Loughborough circuit; William Clowes, Richard Woolhouse, and Richard Jackson, from Hull circuit.

According to the minutes of this meeting, its object was much greater than merely to make preparations for holding a general annual meeting. The following is the commencement:—

"1.—Q. What is the object of this meeting?

"A. To organise the system for the general management of the connexion of the people called Primitive Methodists.

"2.—Q. To accomplish this object is it advisable to establish annual meetings?

"A. It is.

"3.—Q. Of whom shall the annual meetings be composed?

"A. Of three delegates from each circuit, one only of whom shall be a travelling preacher.

"4.—Q. How shall these delegates be chosen?

"A. By the quarter boards of the respective circuits; and it is recommended that they be chosen immediately after dinner, on the first day.

"5.—Q. When and where shall the first annual meeting be held?

"A. At Hull, on the first Tuesday in May, 1820."

Then follow nine pages of rules, embracing the chief principles of discipline now in force in the connexion. So that this "Preparatory Meeting" was also a legislative assembly, and that to an extraordinary extent.

That the Conference of the Primitive Methodist Connexion should be composed of two laymen for every travelling preacher, has frequently excited the surprise of other sections of Methodists, and has not unfrequently been deemed highly objectionable, as not containing the ministerial element in due proportion. It is not in harmony with the design of this work either to defend this arrangement, or the contrary. But considering the origin of the connexion, it is rather surprising that so much of the ministerial

element should have been sanctioned; and from Mr. Bourne's history, we learn that the proportion was not adopted without considerable opposition. In arranging for the preparatory meeting, "it was found difficult to form a proper constitutional delegation. It was thought that three delegates from each circuit would be sufficient, and that to send more would be too expensive. It was also thought necessary for one of them to be a travelling preacher. But to this it was objected, that then the travelling preachers would form a greater proportion in that meeting than they did in any other meetings. Nevertheless, for convenience, and to save expense, this course was at length agreed to."

This proportion of ministerial and lay delegates having been adopted by the circuits in sending delegates to the preparatory meeting, that meeting adopted it for the annual meeting or conference, "the members," says Mr. Bourne, "not knowing how they could improve it."

CHAPTER X.

Progress of the Connexion from the Preparatory Meeting to the first Conference.—Tunstall Circuit.—Nottingham Circuit.—Scotter, Sheffield, and Derby made separate Circuits.—Loughborough Circuit.—Hull Circuit.—The first Conference.—Statistics.

THE preparatory meeting mentioned in our last chapter, appears to have been a means of strengthening and consolidating the connexion, and of contributing to its improvement in various ways. We shall not, however, enter into detail on this subject, but proceed to notice the progress of the respective circuits, from the preparatory meeting in question to the first annual meeting or conference of the connexion. We begin with Tunstall circuit, as the first in order. The latter part of the year 1819, and the former part of the year 1820, appear to have been a period of unprecedented prosperity in this circuit. "At the March quarter-day, 1820," says Mr. Bourne, "the number in society in Tunstall circuit was reported at 1,703; the increase for the year being 1,013; the number in March, 1819, being reported at 690. This great prosperity was owing in the first place, by the mercy of the Lord, to the restoring of the praying services to the camp-meetings; and in the second place, to the sweeping away of the long and tedious exercises, and bringing the talents of the people generally into action." We may add that a third, and not the least cause of this prosperity, was the extensive missionary labours in which the circuit was engaged. Extending its efforts northward to Macclesfield, as noticed in our last chapter, a flourishing society was formed in that town. "In its infant state it had to contend

with difficulties," says Mr. Bourne, "the burden of it was heavy, and the circuit was obliged to make great exertions to keep it on its feet." But these praiseworthy exertions were soon crowned with great success. Though "our preachers first visited Macclesfield (only) in the early part of the year 1819," yet according to Mr. Bourne's Journal, there were seven established classes there, and two new ones, in October of that year, and a flourishing Sabbath-school. In December the same year, the number of members had become 136, and besides the regular services held in a large room near the old church, preaching was also conducted in another part of the town. The work of conversion continued to advance, so that in February, 1820, there were twelve classes, and 172 members in that town.

In the north-western portions of Cheshire the circuit was also carrying on very successful missionary efforts. From an account of the progress of Preston Brook branch of Tunstall circuit, published in the first volume of the Connexional Magazine, we learn that the places which it comprised were mostly visited for the first time in 1819, and that among those were the following: Northwich, Delamere Forest, Weaverham, Great Budworth, Barnton, Bartington, Crowton, Kingsley, Norley, and Frodsham. From Mr. Thomas Brownsword's Journal, as inserted in the same volume, it appears that in December, 1819, there were forty-five members in society at Delamere Forest, twenty-two at Waverham, seventeen at Frodsham, and forty-one at Preston. In the February following, there were thirty at Crowton, and thirty at Kingsley. Messrs. Jackson, and Halsworth, and Turner, and John Garner, and T. and A. Brownsword, appear to have been rendered very useful in this district, and to have been the means of turning hundreds of souls from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God.

While the labours of the missionaries were being successful in this portion of Cheshire, the labours of those employed in the neighbouring branch, that of Burland in the same county, were rendered equally useful; the infant societies gradually gained



strength, and new ones were formed. Towards the close of the year 1819, or early in the year 1820, this branch extended its labours into Shropshire, where an effectual door was opened, and very cheering success witnessed, which resulted some years afterwards in the formation of Prees circuit.

The work of the Lord also advanced rapidly in Darlaston branch, in the mining district of South Staffordshire. The societies daily increased in number and strength, preaching places multiplied, numerous friends and supporters were raised up, and in March, 1820 this branch was made into a separate circuit.

The Derbyshire parts of Tunstall circuit appear to have been equally prosperous with those already mentioned. The following extracts from the journals of Mr. Sampson Turner will illustrate the toilsome labours of the early preachers, the simplicity and zeal by which they were distinguished, and the prosperity of the societies in the upper parts of Derbyshire.

"Friday, October 1st, 1819. When I left Tunstall, about three o'clock in the afternoon, I had forty miles to travel to my Sunday's appointment. Night came on by the time I reached brother Allcock's, at Ladderedge, and I staid with him till next morning.

"Saturday, 2nd. When I had walked five miles, it began to thunder and hail very much. I was obliged to shelter awhile under a haystack, but found it difficult on account of my bundle, which was large and heavy. However, I walked to Kniveton, something more than twenty miles.

"Sunday, 3rd. In the afternoon I conducted a lovefeast at Turnditch. Children of about ten or twelve years of age spoke, and it was very affecting to hear such experience as they narrated. Adults also spoke, and sounder experience I never heard.

"Saturday, 9th. I came to Belper, where the brethren informed me of the good state of the society, and how the Lord had graciously visited them of late.

"Sunday, October 10th. Brother Sims and I went to the six o'clock prayer meeting. At ten I preached out of doors. At one I conducted a lovefeast at Belper. Hundreds were present, and

a cloud of glory rested upon the assembly. Words fail me to express the things which took place. There were great sensations of joy among the people. At night brother Samuel Atterby, from Derby, preached, and the chapel was so full that many could not get in. While we were singing two lines of one of Wesley's hymns, the chapel was filled with the Divine presence, and every one seemed to be engaged with the Most High. At another time I felt such sensations of joy as were truly a foretaste of heaven. Three or four, if not more, were converted and made to rejoice in the Lord."

Similar extracts might be given from the journals of Messrs. Webb and Brownsword, but the above are sufficient for our present purpose. In the year 1819, the town of Burton-upon-Trent, in the North east of Staffordshire, appears also to have been successfully visited by the missionaries. "Thursday, October 21st, 1819," says Mr. Turner, "I walked twenty miles to Burton. We held a prayer meeting at night: the house was full, and souls were crying for mercy. There is at present, a very bright prospect at Burton."

During this year also Nottingham circuit greatly extended its labours, and witnessed very cheering prosperity. The late zealous Jeremiah Gilbert visited Sheffield and the neighbourhood, "where a great and effectual door was opened unto him. The whole country was moved before him, and hundreds of sinners were turned to God. Amongst the numerous sons given to him on this mission, who imbibed the zeal and imitated the heroism of this modern apostle was Mr. Thomas Holliday."

While Mr. Gilbert and others extended their labours with much success northward, into Yorkshire, Mr. Thomas King commenced successful missionary operations in the north-eastern portions of Lincolnshire. In October, 1819, he appears to have visited Grimsby, where a deep and beneficial impression was made, and numbers were brought to God. About the same time, Mr. G. Herod was sent to assist him, and according to Mr. Herod's statement in his sketch of John Benton, "Messrs. King, Heath,



and Herod, visited and missioned those parts which now make Grimsby circuit, Market Rasen circuit, Louth circuit, and Alford branch; and in one year and five months on this mission fifty places were opened, and five hundred souls were gathered within the pale of the church." The work of God prospered so rapidly in several parts of Nottingham circuit, that in March, 1820, it had numerous branches; and three of these, namely Scotter, in Lincolnshire; Sheffield, in Yorkshire, and Derby, had become sufficiently strong to support and govern themselves, and were therefore made into circuits or independent stations.

From accounts given in the first volume of the Connexional Magazine, we learn that Loughborough circuit likewise made some progress during the year under consideration. But as we have not found information of sufficient interest and importance to warrant our descending into details, we proceed to narrate the progress of Hull circuit, the last of the four circuits of which the connexion was composed at the preparatory meeting before-named. We are indebted for our information to the published journals of Mr. Clowes.

In the town of Hull the society continued to prosper, and the friends to the cause had become so numerous, that it was deemed expedient to erect a chapel of considerable dimensions. A site was secured in Mill street, and the foundation laid without delay; the building progressed rapidly, and was "solemnly set apart for the worship of the Most High," September 10th, 1819. The entrance has since been made from West street, and this place of worship is now called West Street Chapel.

At the September quarterly meeting of this year (1819), the number of members in the circuit had become 402. At this meeting two additional travelling preachers were called out, Messrs. Laister and Dent, and the missionary work was soon afterwards extended. An imprudent arrangement made by the circuit committee, appears to have retarded the progress of the work to some extent; but Mr. Clowes visited Pocklington, Knaresborough, Leeds, Dewsbury, and other places with his

wonted success. "I made my way to Pocklington," he says, "and preached in the market-place to a vast multitude. In the evening I spoke in a barn, the property of Mr. John Moore; and the prospect of success was very sanguine. I then directed my attention towards Bielby, Newton, Millington, and other places, God confirming His Word by signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

"On October 23rd, 1819, I opened Knaresborough, by preaching abroad at nine o'clock in the morning; the rain and wind were great, but the people stood their ground well. In the evening I spoke in a dwelling-house. On the Tuesday I stood forth again in a different part of the town, and afterwards formed a society of four members."

On the 24th of November following, Mr. Clowes opened his commission in the populous town of Leeds, being accompanied by Mr. Bailey, of Ferry-bridge. His first sermon was preached in a school-room, and with good effect. Many of his hearers went away rejoicing, greatly delighted and profited with what they had heard and felt. On the following day he formed a small society. The next day he visited Dewsbury, and preached for the first time "in the house of Mr. J. Boothroyd, a short distance from the town."

On the Saturday following, he returned to Leeds and rented a room for preaching, in Sampson's warehouse. "The room was already in the occupation of a dancing master," says Mr. Clowes, "who taught the art of his profession on the week evenings. I arranged with him to teach poor sinners the science of salvation on the Lord's days." At ten o'clock the next morning, Mr. Clowes preached in the room in question, and announced for service again at two. A large congregation attended, and great good seemed likely to be effected, when a circumstance occurred which showed the opposition of the carnal mind to the religion of Jesus, and the self-possession and tact of Mr. Clowes in moments of difficulty and danger. "Sampson, full of subtilty and opposition," says Mr. C., "came up to the top of the stairs, and cried

out that the warehouse was giving way. Consternation and alarm instantaneously seized the people, and a general rush down stairs took place; the people fell upon each other, and the passage was utterly blocked up. Some attempted to jump out of the windows, and many fainted. I stood up and laboured to dissipate the fears of the panic-struck congregation by assuring them there was no danger." This, however, failed to re-assure the people, when Mr. Clowes hit upon an expedient which happily proved successful. He began to sing a hymn in his lively and powerful manner; this arrested the attention of the multitude, inspired them with confidence, and "quietness and order were gradually restored," and the meeting was concluded in peace. Mr. Clowes was afterwards thankful to learn that no person had been either killed or seriously injured by the occurrence. Sampson, however, was bent upon hindering him from preaching in his warehouse, and therefore put a large hanging lock upon the door. This prevented Mr. C. and his congregation from entering for the evening service, and for a moment involved them in perplexity. Permission, however, was given for them to occupy the cellar of a Mrs. Taylor, to which he and his congregation immediately repaired; and the Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon the people there as it had been in the warehouse. "A great and glorious work afterwards broke out in Leeds; many were converted, and a powerful society was raised." At first, however, the accommodations of the missionary were not very satisfactory; he had "to sleep in public houses, and go supperless to bed."

At the December quarterly meeting of Hull circuit, 1819, the travelling preachers were six in number, the chapels two, and the members of society 856.

Soon after this meeting Mr. Clowes took another missionary route, and visited in succession the villages of Goddle, Arkendale, and Martoncum-Grafton, and the arm of the Lord was made bare in the conversion of many sinners. At one of the places, the enemies of the cross circulated defamatory reports of the missionary, affirming that he was a scamp, and "had left a wife and six

children chargeable to the parish." But these scandalous reports failed to produce any permanent impression; "the mission opened in all directions, and sinners were awakened and converted to God."

On the 4th of March, 1820, accompanied by several friends, Mr. Clowes opened his commission at Ripon by preaching twice with good effect. A great excitement was awakened, and much spiritual good done.

On the 13th of the same month Mr. Clowes attended his circuit's quarterly meeting, and found that the increase of members for the quarter was 260, making a total of 1,116. Three additional travelling preachers were called out by this meeting, and arrangements made for the missionary work to be further extended.

After the business terminated, Mr. Clowes "took another tour visiting the missions which he had previously opened at Riverbridge, North and South Cave, Newbald, Ferry-bridge, Knaresborough, Arkendale, Harrogate, and Brotherton." At Marton, the society had prospered so largely that he found it expedient to divide it into three classes, which soon after comprised eighty members, and a new chapel was speedily built for their accommodation. In the revival at this place, the late Mr. Thomas Dawson was brought to God, who afterwards became one of the most influential lay members in the connexion, and for many years took a prominent part in its most important assemblies for business.

Mr. Clowes soon afterwards visited Ripon again, and found the society had risen to sixty members; also the village of Burton Leonard which he had visited before, and where he now found twenty members.

The first annual meeting or conference of the connexion was held at Hull in May, 1820. The statistics of the community were reported as follow: 8 circuits; 48 travelling preachers; 277 local preachers; 7842 members of society. The number of members had not been taken before since July 26th, 1811, when the number was estimated at 200. From these numbers it appears that the

progress of the community for several years was but slow. Of the 7,842 members reported to this conference, there is reason to believe that about half had been added during the preceding year; for 1,000 had been added in Tunstall circuit, 500 or 900 in Hull circuit, and it is probable that Nottingham and Loughborough circuits had realized a proportionate increase. The causes of this slow progress were probably various. The fearful struggle in which the nation was engaged with France during the early portion of the connexion's history, would prove some hindrance to the progress of evangelical religion, for a fierce war-like spirit is at utter variance with the benevolent spirit of the gospel. The temporal distress and political agitation which followed the termination of the war would also throw obstacles in the way of a new and feeble community. The localities, too, in which the preachers mostly laboured in the early years of the connexion were so thinly inhabited that large accessions to the societies could hardly be expected. Besides there were no outward attractions to draw people to the new denomination. The preachers were men possessed of common sense, of sound theological views, and of ardent zeal for the conversion of sinners; but they were not distinguished by learning and eloquence, in the sense in which these terms are generally understood. Their places of worship were the open-air, dwelling-houses, and rented rooms of various sizes, often dark and damp, and in many cases unpleasant and uncomfortable in a high degree. The converts were mostly from the humblest classes, dressed in coarse attire, and of unpolished manners. These things presented no outward inducement to unite with the infant societies; and it is no marvel that even great numbers who were awakened under the thundering addresses of the preachers in the open-air, sought shelter in established churches instead of strengthening the hands of those under whom they were brought to God. These considerations may partly account for the tardy progress of the community during its earliest years. Others might be named; but we eschew prolixity, and therefore proceed to state that the first annual meeting or conference was composed, accord-

ing to Mr. Clowes, of six travelling preachers and twelve laymen. "Great preparations had been made for this meeting in all the circuits," and much prayer had doubtlessly ascended to God in its behalf. "It was a very interesting meeting," says Mr. Bourne. And when we consider the intense interest which the societies had taken in it, the commodious chapel in which it was held, (then by far the largest in the connexion,) the great prosperity of the preceding year, and the animating prospects of still more abundant success, we may readily conceive that the assembly would be filled with unusual joy and gratitude. The religious services in connection with this conference were numerous and powerful. "We had preaching morning and evening," says Mr. Clowes, "and camp-meetings on the Lord's day at Hull, at Keyingham, in Holderness, and at Barrow, in Lincolnshire. It fell to my lot to attend the Barrow meeting; we had two preaching stands, and we carried on the praying labours with five praying companies, and visible good was done among the thousands that attended." "The camp-meetings and all the other services of worship," says Mr. Bourne, "were remarkably successful. A great number of conversions took place, particularly on the Tuesday evening, May 9th, when a lovefeast was held in Hull, at which many were in distress, and it is believed forty obtained liberty."

At this conference it was wisely determined to proceed with a monthly magazine, at threepence per month. That begun in the foregoing year, "edited by a person at Leicester," had not met with general support, and had therefore been discontinued when eight numbers had been printed. It was decided that four other numbers should be added to complete the volume, and that a regular issue should commence with the first of the month of 1821. Mr. Hugh Bourne was appointed editor, and Mr. James Bourne book steward, should the magazine be printed in Staffordshire, which proved to be most convenient; and Mr. James Bourne, therefore, became the first general book steward in the connexion.

We then went into Watergate-street, and held a prayer-meeting in a yard. I had intended to preach also in Boughton, (another part of the city) and a large company assembled: but the weather was so unfavourable that we were obliged to divide into companies, and hold meetings in three houses. Many persons were in distress, and some obtained pardon."

The missionaries, however, afterwards suffered much persecution in this city. Many persons "of the baser sort" annoyed them in various ways in the room they rented for worship, frequently singing profane songs during the time the devout people were singing hymns of praise to God, and in mockery shouting "Amen" during prayer. They sometimes laid violent hands upon the people, and even knocked them down in the streets, doing them grievous bodily injury. And when they were brought before the magistrates of that day for these outrages, they were let go with impunity, and the poor persecuted people were told by those rulers who, in this case, "carried the sword in vain," that they deserved all they suffered. But though those bigoted magistrates refused to enforce the laws of the land for the protection of the grossly injured people, the missionaries continued their labours in the city, and the great Head of the Church graciously interposed in their behalf. Mr. John Ride, to whom we are indebted for this information, was one of the early missionaries here, and witnessed a signal display of Divine grace on one memorable Sabbath evening. On arriving at the preaching-room at the appointed time, he found it crowded mostly with persecutors who had been encouraged in their wickedness by the conduct of the magistrates. On Mr. Ride's entering the room one of these godless disturbers of the worship cried out, "make room for the parson." Then going towards him, said jeeringly, "I will make a way for you, sir," and marched before him in the same spirit and manner. Mr. Ride ascended the pulpit and began the service with emotions suitable to the occasion. Knowing that human help had failed, and that if the Lord did not interpose in an extraordinary manner, public worship could no longer be



ained by his friends in that place, his soul was drawn out in ony of prayer. The persecutors sang profane songs while he the first hymn,—and when he began to pray aloud they usly shouted "Amen," so as almost to drawn his voice. owever, continued to pour out his soul to God with a fervour few could equal. Like Jacob he wrestled, and like Israel evailed. After he had been engaged in prayer for some time ower of God descended among the persecutors; several of were "pricked in their hearts," and cried aloud for mercy, he rest were terror-stricken, and fled from the place. By emarkable and gracious interposition of the Almighty, a was given to the persecution, and the infant society y strengthened and encouraged.

ile Burland branch was thus enlarging its borders in ire, Belper branch of Tunstall circuit was also prospering y in Derbyshire, and it made such advancement that during ar it became a separate circuit, and in the spring of 1821, ded its labours to Winster, Matlock, and other places, in the of Derbyshire.

unday, May 27th, 1821," says Mr. W. Allcock, "I com- ed my missionary labours in the Peak of Derbyshire. I hed at Winster in the morning, at Bonsall in the afternoon, t Bolehill in the evening, to large congregations in the open- On the following day I spoke at Winster, to about 800 e, and on Tuesday, 29th, at Bonsall to about 700. Here raged; after I had preached on the cross the rabble shouted stoned me out of the place; but this was the means of ening one vile sinner to a sense of his danger. On the 30th, ached at Matlock-bank; on the 31st at Crich. On Friday, 1st, I preached at Bonsall and Winster, and in the evening tlock-bank to, I believe, a thousand people. The constable ed me down, but the Lord was with me. Saturday, 2nd, I hed at Matlock again. The people were very attentive, but I had nearly finished the sermon the constable came with aff and a watering-can, and beat the can so loudly that I

could not be heard. We therefore sang a hymn, and while we were thus engaged, a few men pushed the constable away, and he could not get nigh us again." The work of the Lord prospered encouragingly at these and other places, and Winster soon became the head of a new circuit.

Tunstall circuit was also at this time prospering at Burton-upon-Trent and in the neighbourhood, and several new places were visited, of which the following account has been furnished by Mr. Sampson Turner. "Having been appointed to labour in the neighbourhood of Burton-upon-Trent, and to open the adjacent towns and villages, on Whit-Sunday, 1820, I went in company with several friends to visit the ancient city of Lichfield. I preached on what is called 'Green Hill,' among the caravans come thither for a show. When I had done I announced that I should be there again, if well, on a certain day in the week. The churchwarden replied, 'if you come hither again you may expect to be put into the city prison.' I answered, 'God being my helper I shall be here at the time I have specified.' I accordingly went at the time appointed, when an attempt was successfully made to disturb the service. Tin cans, kettles, tambourines, and other instruments were employed to interrupt our worship, and they made such a noise that we could not be heard. We therefore removed to a place nearer the centre of the city, and took our stand under a tree, where we held our meeting in peace. We afterwards obtained a blacksmith's pent house for our place of worship [a striking contrast with the magnificent cathedral of the city], in which many souls were saved, most of whom have died happy in the Lord.

"On returning to Burton on the evening of the before-named Sabbath, we called at the town of Alrewas, and held a service there on the green. Considerable excitement was produced by singing into the place. The public-houses were soon emptied, and some of the simple people were alarmed, thinking that the Radicals [Political Radical Reformers] were coming. I obtained a chair to stand upon, and preached from 'How shall we escape if we

neglect so great salvation?' Many were truly awakened, who afterwards were converted; and in this place several travelling and local preachers were raised up who have rendered good service to the connexion.

"One evening about the forementioned time, I and some friends went to Barton-under-need-wood with an intention to preach. But many of the inhabitants greatly opposed us; they caused the church bells to be rung, and employed kettles, cans, and various other instruments to drown our voices. The Lord, however, was with us, and notwithstanding the persecution we endured, we obtained a footing in the place.

"Some time after this I and two friends went to another village called Tatenhill. We began to sing in a large open space, not far from a gentleman's house. We had not proceeded long before two gentlemen came out of the mansion, apparently worse for liquor, and one of them pulled me off the chair, and tore my waistcoat and shirt, and ordered a constable to take me into custody. The constable apprehended my two friends as well as me, and kept us all night in a public-house without providing us a bed. Next morning he took us before a magistrate, when I was desired to pay the expenses; but on refusing to do so, we were set at liberty without cost. The next evening I preached in the same place again. The gentleman who had pulled me down on the previous night, came again and began to write, but after writing some time he suddenly went away, and I saw him no more.

"Early one Sunday morning, I preached in the open-air at Tutbury, and then proceeded to Shetton to preach in the forenoon. On entering the village several rotten goose eggs were thrown at me, and so besmeared my clothes that I was obliged to borrow another person's coat in which I preached in the streets, whilst my own was rinsed and dried. In the afternoon I preached at Horninglow, and in the evening at Burton-upon-Trent. Persecution raged in several of the places we visited; but the word of the Lord ran and was glorified, and many sinners were converted to God. To Him be all the glory."

Turning from Tunstall circuit to the newly-formed circuit of Darlaston, in the south of Staffordshire, we meet with similar evidences of prosperity to those which we have just noticed, despite of persecution and imprisonment. In May and June, 1820, Mr. Thomas Brownsword, before mentioned, laboured with great acceptance and success at Darlaston, Wednesbury, and other places in the locality, often preaching in the open-air to congregations supposed to contain a thousand persons, and frequently witnessing the conversion of many sinners. About this time preaching was established at Dudley, a town in the northern extremity of Worcestershire.

On Sunday, July 2nd, Mr. Brownsword and others went five miles further into the same county, to the beautiful town of Stourbridge. One of the number preached there in the afternoon to a large congregation; at six in the evening, Mr. Brownsword stood up to preach at the top of the town to about a thousand persons. But after he had spoken for a short time a constable came and took him into custody. Another preacher began to exhort and was likewise taken in charge. On the following morning a third stood up, and was also apprehended. All the three were brought before the magistrates of the town about noon on Monday the 3rd, and because they had preached in the open-air and would not promise to refrain from the practice, they were committed to the county jail at Worcester. Here they exerted themselves for the good of the prisoners generally, preaching or exhorting them every night, and a great reformation soon appeared among them, and many who had been accustomed to curse and swear began to read and pray.

The imprisonment of the brethren also produced a great excitement throughout the district, and was graciously overruled for the furtherance of the gospel. "This imprisonment," said Mr. Hugh Bourne, soon after it had taken place, "caused considerable excitement. It was a new thing in Darlaston circuit, and the friends there wrote immediately to Tunstall for advice and assistance. Throughout Darlaston circuit and a great part of

Tunstall circuit, prayer was made without ceasing to God for help, and He raised up friends on every side, kindness flowed from every quarter, ministers of other communities came forward to assist, voluntary contributions came in liberally; Tunstall circuit also pledged its aid, and due preparations were made to meet the expected trial. But as the preachers had broken no laws, those who had ordered them to be apprehended declined bringing the case to a trial." The preachers were taken from jail to the Shire Hall on the 11th of July, and there liberated. In the evening of the same day they held a meeting on the race ground at Worcester. A vast concourse attended, partly through curiosity to see and hear persons who had been in jail for preaching the gospel, hundreds were melted to tears, deep religious impressions were made on many minds, and the apparently untoward event became the means of introducing the Primitive Methodists into this beautiful city.

After Mr. Brownsword's liberation from prison, he returned to the neighbourhood of Darlaston, Wednesbury, and Bilston, and laboured with his wonted success. On Sunday evening, August 6th, 1820, he preached at Dudley, one or two backsliders were restored, and many other persons were seeking the Lord; and at the close of the service he formed a society of eight members.

Mr. James Bonser was also at this time labouring in this populous district with very great success.

On Tuesday, July 4th, he visited Mr. Brownsword and his brethren in prison at Worcester, and the same evening preached about twenty miles distance at Brierley Hill, between Dudley and Stourbridge, then an inconsiderable village, but now a populous place, and the head of a powerful circuit. His congregation was large; about fifty persons were in distress about their souls, and several found peace through believing. In the same month he conducted a camp-meeting there, while preaching at which the cries of penitents were so loud that he was obliged to stop preaching to pray with them. In the evening, a lovefeast was held in the open-air, when many more persons cried to the Lord for

mercy. It was supposed that forty souls found peace during this day's services.

The following evening he met with very unworthy treatment at Wolverhampton, where Mr. S. Turner had previously been interrupted by a lawless mob. Mr. Bonser and a few associates began to sing in the Market-place, where he was interrupted by a constable, and then sent to prison by a magistrate. He followed the example of Mr. Brownsword and his pious companions in Worcester jail, in using earnest efforts to promote the spiritual good of the prisoners, many of whom were deeply impressed by his earnest exhortations and fervent prayers, and wished that he might remain with them. Many sympathising friends also visited him, and took him needful refreshments. The next day he was taken before a bench of magistrates, who desired him to promise to preach no more in the open-air in that town. This he refused to do so long as persons should be found to swear, tell lies, get drunk, or break the Sabbath. He was therefore required to find bail for his appearance at the sessions at Stafford. Two persons readily became bound for him. On October 18th, he repaired to the county town to take his trial. He was called up on the 20th, and required to pay four shillings. He inquired for what purpose he was to pay that sum. He was told for his recognizances. He replied good humouredly that he thought he ought rather to have something given him for his trouble, when he was told that if he did not choose to pay the amount, he must take his departure without. He did so, and preached the same evening at Cannock Lane, several miles distant. The persecution at Wolverhampton does not appear to have materially hindered the success of the missionaries. Under date of August 13th, Mr. Bonser says, "there is a blessed work in this town." The same might be said of most of the towns in this district. Multitudes were drawn to listen to the zealous preachers, and great numbers were turned from the error of their ways, and became united in church-fellowship.

Of the progress of Nottingham circuit during this year we are

not able to furnish much information. The Lincoln branch, however, made such advancement that at the September quarterly meeting, 1820, it was made into a circuit, or an independent station; and from the journal of Mr. John Hallsworth, published in the Connexional Magazine, this new circuit appears to have made encouraging progress. He had visited many of the places two years previously, as the first, or one of the first, missionaries sent to this district, and it was cheering to him now to find much fruit of his former labours, and to witness the improved state of the societies. Gratefully he exclaims, "O! what has God wrought within these two years!" He had previously suffered much persecution in this locality, so that his life was frequently in peril; and he was now affected to learn the sufferings of some of his persecutors. At Fulbeck, the ring-leader of those who had combined to oppose him had become insane, and was now in a lunatic asylum, and others had had serious losses in their cattle. Some degree of persecution still continued, but the work of the Lord prospered notwithstanding, and the societies increased in number and strength.

The success of Boston branch of Nottingham circuit during this year was likewise very encouraging. The following extracts from the journal of Mr. Francis Birch will illustrate the spirit in which he and his brethren prosecuted their missionary labours in this part of Lincolnshire, and the success with which the great Head of the Church was graciously pleased to favour them.

"Sunday, September 24th. Spoke at Azlacby, then at Rippingale, and at night at Azlacby again to a large congregation. The power of the Lord came down, saints rejoiced, and sinners trembled, and some could not rest all the night, the Lord worked so powerfully with them.

"Tuesday, September 26th. Some of the Azlacby and Rippingale friends went with me to Hackarby, a dark place. While we were singing and praying, satan's servants shouted and hallooed; and while I was preaching they several times attempted to throw me down. When I had done, they swore they would kill me that

night; but the Lord protected me, and though stones came after us like a shower of hail, none of us received any material injury.

"Wednesday, 27th. I rejoiced that I was counted worthy to suffer reproach and persecution for the sake of Christ. At night I spoke at Rippingdale.

"Sunday, October 1st. Assisted at a camp-meeting at Spalding. During the praying service in the afternoon many were in distress, and some found liberty.

"Wednesday, October 4th. I was appointed to preach at Holbeach. Here our preachers had been ill-used; two were dragged off the chair while preaching, and were much abused. I was rather cast down at the prospect of ill-treatment; but while praying to God he took away all fear, and I went to the place willing to suffer or to die for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. I found people waiting for the service, and I preached in the streets to a large and well-behaved congregation.

"Thursday, October 5th. I had to preach at Sutton. Our friends had visited this place but once, and some of the inhabitants threw eggs at the preacher. I cast my care upon the Lord, and spoke by the light of a lantern to two or three hundred people, most of whom behaved well, and many of them wept. A few threw some eggs at me; but the Lord graciously sustained me, and opened the hearts of some of the hearers to receive the word preached."

Similar extracts might be given from the same journal, detailing the prosperity of the work of God at Boston, Friskney, Alford, Bilsby, Butterwick, &c.; but for the sake of brevity we close our extracts with the following:—

"Wednesday, December 11th, 1820, was the quarterly meeting of Boston branch. The travelling and local preachers were of one heart and one soul, and it rejoiced me greatly to hear how the work of God was reviving all over the circuit. The Lord is pouring out his Spirit in a wonderful manner."

Unable to furnish further particulars of the prosperity of the work of God in Nottingham circuit, to which reference is made in

the last extract, we proceed to narrate the progress of Sheffield circuit during this connexional year. We shall quote somewhat largely from the journal of Mr. Jeremiah Gilbert, as published in the second volume of the connexional magazine. The extracts we shall furnish will shew the difficulties and opposition with which he had to contend, the heroic and cheerful spirit in which he encountered the whole, and the success with which God was pleased to bless his self-denying and zealous labours.

Friday, May 12th, 1820, he left Hull, where he had been attending the first conference, and calling at Kirton, in Lincolnshire, he had the pleasure of seeing the conversion of sinners there.

Arriving at Sheffield on the following day, he was ready for the herculean labours of the Sabbath, which he thus describes:—

"Sunday, May 14th, at Sheffield. Preached at six o'clock in the morning in Young-street. At eight I preached in Water-lane, I suppose the wickedest place in Sheffield; but many persons appeared to be greatly affected, and came in the evening to chapel. At half-past ten I preached in the chapel. At two I administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper. At six I preached again in the chapel, and at eight in the Park. This was a blessed day to many souls.

"Monday, May 22nd. Preached in the chapel, and afterwards renewed the society tickets to three classes. The Lord set one soul at liberty, and filled several with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"Tuesday, May 23rd. We went to a friend's house, and met with several praying souls, and two were plucked as brands out of the fire. Wednesday, 24th. Preached at Rotherham, and one person was set at liberty and praised the Lord. Thursday, 25th. I went to see a sick woman, happy in the Lord. A sinner was converted while I was there; and another person came to persecute us for making a noise, but I met her at the door and spoke to her of the love of Christ, and of death, judgment, and eternity, and she became greatly affected, began to cry for mercy, and the

Lord made her happy in his pardoning love. Monday, 29th, preached at Greasbro'; renewed the society tickets, and the Lord saved two persons.

"Sunday, June 4th. I attended a camp-meeting on Ravensfield Common. The scene was very interesting; different companies were wrestling with God in mighty prayer, tears were flowing from many eyes, and sinners were crying for mercy and receiving salvation at the hands of Jesus. A boy about twelve years of age was made happy, and nearly at the same time a young woman of about fifteen; and near them stood trembling an old man, with hair as white as wool, and crying to God for mercy. The power of God was gloriously displayed at this camp-meeting."

On the 15th of June he went to Barlbro', and stood upon a heap of stones and began to sing, no one daring to lend him a chair to stand upon. After he had prayed and began to preach, a clergyman came with a constable and desired him to desist. Mr. Gilbert declined the request, and a long conversation ensued between him and the clergyman, at the close of which the constable took Mr. G. into custody; but he cheerfully sang the praises of God as he was led away, the clergyman endeavouring in vain to silence him. After Mr. G. was placed in a room another long conversation occurred between him and the clergyman, who at length repeatedly requested him to go away. But Mr. Gilbert knew that he had been illegally apprehended, and, like Paul at Philippi, he refused to be sent away privately. He remained in the place to which he had been conducted, there read and prayed till a late hour, and then retired to rest happy in the Lord. The following day the constable came to request him to depart, but Mr. Gilbert objected to pay the expenses which had been incurred. On the 17th of June he was therefore conveyed in a cart to meet the magistrates at Chesterfield, eight miles distant. He sang the praises of God as he was driven through the streets of Barlbro', which produced considerable excitement among the inhabitants. On being brought before the magistrates he pleaded his own cause,



was liberated, and returned joyfully to Sheffield. He had now become pretty familiar with constables, prisons, and magistrates, and could endure imprisonment with great equanamity. "Within the last fifteen months," he says, "I have been taken before magistrates for preaching the gospel six or seven times; but I have never lost anything but pride, shame, unbelief, hardness of heart, the fear of man, love of the world, and prejudice of mind. I have always come out of prison more pure than when I went in."

On Sunday, June 19th, he preached at five o'clock in the morning in Young-street, Sheffield; at seven in Water-lane, and then laboured hard at a camp-meeting, and conducted a lovefeast in the evening, at which thirty persons were supposed to obtain pardoning mercy. Ten or twelve more found peace at a meeting on the following night, and similar success is recorded as having been realized by this devoted man for several weeks in succession.

Another imprisonment, however, awaited him, which we must here briefly notice.

On July 12th, he went to Eckington in Derbyshire, and while preaching in the open-air he was interrupted by a constable, who desired him to give over. Mr. Gilbert inquired two or three times for a summons and none being produced, he went on with his discourse till the constable seized him by the coat, and pulled him down from the chair upon which he stood. He then took Mr. G. to a gloomy room, the windows of which had strong bars, and the door of which was full of nails. Mr. Gilbert looking through the bars of the windows, saw many people assembled in front, and he exhorted sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and believers to promote the glory of God. Some of the people united with him in singing hymns, and he cheerfully endured his unmerited privations and sufferings. He conversed with the jailor about the salvation of his soul, and prayed with him. About midnight he retired to rest, after having blocked up the windows as well as he could to keep out the cold. The room was a damp and doleful one, and he had neither bed nor straw to lie upon. He therefore lay upon

some laths, and had a besom for his pillow. The next day he was visited by friends who declared that his prison was much worse than Derby dungeon. "But the Lord," he says, "converted it into a paradise;" so happy did the testimony of a good conscience and the gracious presence of his Saviour make him in his gloomy cell. The clergyman and the constable were perplexed about the best course to be taken with him, but he was content and cheerful. On the 14th, they conducted him in a gig to a magistrate at Chesterfield, a gentleman very unworthy to sustain the dignity with which he was invested. He threatened to fine Mr. Gilbert twenty pounds for preaching in an unlicensed place; though "the place was the king's highway." More surprising still, and which leads us to conjecture that he was either insane or intoxicated, he threatened to fine him other twenty pounds for "not having a proper license," though himself had given the license which Mr. G. produced! But after two or three hours altercation between Mr. G. and the clergyman and the magistrate, Mr. Gilbert was served with a summons, and then left to take his own course. He hastened back to Eckington, according to his intimation to the magistrate, and stood up to preach near the place where he had been pulled down a few nights before. He had a large and attentive congregation, who were deeply affected under the Word. We hear no more of the summons, and suppose the persecution here ceased.

While Mr. Gilbert was encountering persecution and imprisonment in one part of Sheffield circuit, Mr. W. Taylor began missionary labours in another, and met with similar interruption and considerable success.

On Sunday, July 7th, he preached at Peniston, near Barnsley, when two men who had been proverbial for wickedness, being nicknamed "the devil's captains," were convinced of sin, and afterwards became remarkable for piety.

On the 9th, he preached to a large congregation at Berchwait; but being unable to procure a lodging, he was obliged to sit by the fire all night in a private house.

Sunday, July 16th, 1820, he and another stood up in
lersfield market-place, and began to preach; but the con-
s rudely interrupted them, and took them into custody.
were put into a dirty prison, and locked and bolted in. But
'aul and Silas at Philippi, they "prayed and sang praises to
' A multitude of people collected outside, many of whom
y sympathized with them, and gave them food through the
of the prison. Many inquired into the doctrines they
hed, and Mr. Taylor gave them all needful information. It
bout half-past two in the afternoon when they were im-
ied; and such was the excitement it produced, that many
e remained outside the prison till near midnight. "I was
happy all the time," says Mr. Taylor, "and when the people
ted, I lay down and slept a few hours. Early in the morning
in another cell, who had been taken up for house-breaking,
to me to pray for him. I exhorted him to repentance and
in Christ, and then prayed with him. He also prayed, and
a sore trouble."

ien Mr. T. and his fellow-labourer were brought before a
trate, he desired them to preach no more in that town, but
is they could not consent, and were at length allowed to
t without fine. Many people testified their gratitude and
ion to the preachers, and took them to their houses for
hment and comfort.

. Taylor next visited Barnsley, New-hill, Wombwell, and
iorn, and met with encouraging success. At Kirkburton,
onstables interruped him, and persecution raged, but the
opened his way and good was done. He was also successful
dworth and Mapplewell, and societies were established there.
Friday, September 1st, 1820, Mr. Taylor preached in one of
reets of Wakefield, and again on the following day, and great
was accomplished. "The Lord inclined many hearts to serve

Huddersfield, Wakefield, and many other places in the
ty of these towns were now regularly visited by Mr. Taylor
is zealous coadjutors, and societies were established, which

have since greatly progressed. Mr. Taylor continued to labour with great success in Barnsley branch, and much good was effected at Horbury, Skelmanthorpe, Shafton, Royston, Silkstone, Thurgoland, Hoylandswain, and many other places. During the quarter ending March 19th, 1821, there was a great in-gathering of precious souls, upwards of four hundred being added to the societies in this branch.

During the same quarter Loughborough circuit was favoured with almost equal prosperity. "Monday, December 18th, 1820," says Mr. S. Atterby, "our quarterly meeting was held at Loughborough. It was a season of much good. Unity and concord prevailed among us while considering the affairs of the church, and our souls were filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. When the business of the day was concluded, the travelling preachers made a covenant with each other to set apart a portion of each day to pray that the work of God might revive more among us, and that our labours might be more abundantly blessed. We accordingly wrestled with God from day to day, and he soon heard our prayers; there was a general quickening in the society, and the gospel chariot went forward with greater rapidity. During the quarter ending in March, 1821, we added about three hundred members to the societies in the circuit."

But no circuit made such progress during this connexional year as Hull circuit. It greatly increased its number of missionaries, and widely extended its borders. In briefly recording its progress, we begin with the missionary labours of Mr. Clowes, partly as detailed in the connexional magazine for 1821, and partly as recorded in his journal published by himself. At the June quarterly meeting of 1820, the circuit was divided into seven branches, namely, Hull, Brotherton, Pocklington, Ripon, York, Leeds, and Malton, in which eighteen travelling preachers were employed. Hutton Rudby mission was apparently opened immediately afterwards. In Mr. Clowes' journals there is evidently an error respecting the year in which this mission was commenced. He places the narrative after the conference of

1821, whereas Hutton Rudby was the head of a circuit at that conference, as appears in its published minutes. Accounts of his visiting Hutton Rudby in July, 1820, were published in the connexional magazine for March, 1821, a considerable period before the arrangement in his journal would lead us to suppose. In other respects the two accounts substantially agree. "When the June quarterly meeting was over," says Mr. Clowes, "I departed from Hull in order to commence Hutton Rudby mission. On my arrival at Thirsk, I stood up in the spacious Market-place in the name of Jesus. I had a large company to preach to, and was kindly entertained for the night by Mr. Greathead. I had afterwards gracious seasons at Thirsk; and we formed a society, and got a place to preach in."

On Thursday, July 20th, 1820, he came to Hutton Rudby, and held a meeting at night. The next day he preached in the open-air. On Sunday, the 23rd, he preached twice in the open-air, and formed a society of seven members. In the evening he preached at Swainby, and one person was brought into liberty. He also preached with success at Potto and Faceby; at the former place three souls were brought to God on his second visit, one of whom was Mr. Hebbron, who afterwards became a distinguished travelling preacher.

On Sunday, July 30th, he conducted a camp-meeting upon a depressed part of a mountain called Scarth Nick. About two thousand persons were supposed to be present. The Word preached was attended with much Divine power; the prayers of the people were very fervent, and many sinners were deeply impressed. Four or five persons were made happy in the love of God; one of whom, a farmer, was so overjoyed that he called upon the hills and dales, and every thing that had breath, to help him to praise God. He afterwards hastened home, and told his wife and servant what the Lord had done for his soul, and they also sought and found the salvation of God. At this camp-meeting Mr. Clowes received invitations to visit Ingleby and Brompton, near Northallerton. At the latter place, since become the head of

a circuit, he preached in the open-air to a congregation supposed to contain about one thousand five hundred persons, and great good was effected. He also visited Northallerton, and preached to about a thousand hearers, and "all were as tranquil as if they had been in a chapel."

He likewise visited Stokesley, also since become the head of a circuit, and preached to a great congregation in the Market-place. He had invitations to Weathercote, and to Anterly in Bilsdale, at both of which he preached with great effect, and many were brought to God. Many exciting scenes were witnessed during his missionary tour in this district, and a great awakening took place among the inhabitants, which we cannot particularize. On September 7th, he arrived at Hull, having been absent ten weeks, during which time he had succeeded in opening many places, had travelled four hundred miles on foot, and his whole expenses to the circuit had amounted to only thirty shillings.

We must now glance at the missionary operations of the connexion in the east of Yorkshire. We begin with the ancient town of Beverley. Mr. John Verity was the first preacher of the body who preached here. Under date of August 27th, 1820, he says, "In the morning, I preached at Cherry Burton; in the afternoon in Beverley Market-place, to a large and peaceable congregation, and evident good was done." Mr. Clowes visited the town shortly after, and preached "in the Market-place to a large multitude." Mr. Matthew Denton, who has kindly furnished us with an interesting sketch of the rise and progress of Primitive Methodism in Beverley, says:—

"As the winter approached, a large upper room near the Fish shambles was taken for the use of the society by two pious widows, Mrs. Copling and Mrs. Rogers, who became responsible for the rent. The room was soon filled with attentive and eager listeners; the word came home to the consciences of many; and in February, 1821, a small society was formed. In this room a chair served as a pulpit, and a bench that would seat about six persons was the only sitting accommodation for the congregation; yet the people

gladly attended, and contentedly stood to hear 'words whereby they might be saved.' Many were added to the growing church, and the room soon became too small; a more commodious one was therefore hired in Turner's yard; there the infant church encountered much opposition for a time. One evening a person entered the room with two constables for the purpose of breaking up the meeting, but the praying people continued to pour out their souls to God till the proper time to conclude, and had 'a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.' Mr. J. Jenkinson was recognised as one of the party, and was summoned on the following morning before the magistrates of the town, on a charge of making a riotous noise. Though at first perplexed what to say, he realised a fulfillement of the promise of Christ,—'It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.' He was, however, required to find security in a £20 bond for his appearance at the next quarter sessions. When the time came, he was present to answer to the charge, but no bill was brought into the court.

"Street preaching was sometimes resorted to. On one occasion Mr. W. Driffield took his stand in the Market-place, but he had not proceeded far before a constable, with an order from the Mayor, seized him, and dragged him through one of the principal streets into the presence of a magistrate; but after a few interrogations, he was politely dismissed.

"In the year 1825 a chapel was built, and it was opened on the 1st of May, by Messrs. J. Flesher and T. King. It is pleasantly and conveniently situated in the centre of the town, and measures 45 feet in length, and 28 in breadth, and will seat 400 persons."

The cost of the erection was above £800, and as not much above £100 was raised by collections and subscriptions, the trustees soon became involved in pecuniary difficulties. Ultimately, however, relief was obtained, and the good work continued to prosper. "The premises have since been greatly improved, and there is now a flourishing society of two hundred members, and a prosperous Sabbath-school."



At Cherry Burton, Woodmansey, and other villages in the neighbourhood, the missionaries laboured with more or less success, and soon found their way to Driffield. At this town Mr. Clowes preached in the theatre, on January 18th, 1821, the society having taken it for a preaching place. Here the good work prospered, and the labours of the zealous and successful John Oxtoby, familiarly called "Praying Johnny," were blessed in the conversion of Mr. Byas, who lent the society money to complete a new chapel. He afterwards died happy in the Lord, and gave the money he had lent to the trustees for the benefit of the chapel, which placed them and the society in easy circumstances. The work of God steadily advanced in this town: and Middleton, Bainton, Lund, and other places in the vicinity, were successfully visited, and societies formed thereat, which now form a part of Driffield circuit. Bridlington, Bridlington Quay, Flamborough, and other places near, began to share in the labours of the missionaries about the same time as those just named. On Wednesday, January 10th, 1821, Mr. Clowes preached at Flamborough, when "the Lord made bare his arm, and two souls were converted." The next day he preached at Bridlington Quay, and several persons were in distress about their souls. On the following Sunday he preached again at Flamborough, and two souls were brought into the liberty of the gospel. Fifty members were then belonging to the society in that place, and five were added to their number on that day. On the following Sunday, January 21st, 1821, he preached twice at Bridlington, when two persons found liberty. He met the society, which, like that at Flamborough, contained about fifty members. At Flixton, several miles further north, the village "seemed to be on a move," and many were deeply affected. Thornham, Sewerby, Gransmore, Thwing, Hunmanby, Forden, Speeton, Seamer, and other villages contiguous, were also visited, and good was done thereat.

The work of God likewise prospered under the labours of the missionaries in various parts of Holderness. They first visited this eastern extremity of Yorkshire in April, 1820. Mr. Clowes

preached the first sermon, which was in the street at Keyingham, from Acts xix. 2. A camp-meeting was held here on Sunday, May 7th, 1820, in connection with the first conference held at Hull. It is said to have been "lively, powerful, and numerously attended, and to have been successful in the conversion of many sinners." Patrington, Keyingham, Burstwick, Ryhill, Easington, Kilnsea, Roos, Rimswell, Burton Pidsea, Skirlaugh, Withernwick, Aldborough, Hedon, and Preston, were among the places which were favoured with the labours of these devoted men. "At Keyingham," says Mr. Clowes, "I delivered the word in the open-air to a quiet multitude; the work increased, and a small chapel was erected. At Burstwick, where I laboured much and had fruit, a new chapel was raised, which I had the pleasure of dedicating to the worship of the Most High. At Roos also, many were converted. At Skirlaugh we held a camp-meeting; many persons attended, but little fruit appeared. At Rimswell we formed a small society; and at Easington the work broke out, and a chapel was built, which I opened. At Kilnsea I preached in the house of Mr. W. Hodge, who had a large family of children, of whom many were converted." Preston, six miles from Hull, merits special notice. The Primitive Methodists first visited this place towards the end of July, 1820. They preached in the street on returning from a camp-meeting at Keyingham, occupying for a pulpit the cart in which they rode, when some mischievous person drew out the linch-pin from one of the wheels, and thereby exposed the friends to considerable peril. The next Sabbath several preachers and friends came from Hull to hold a camp-meeting on what is called "Maudlin," or "Magdalen Fair Sunday." This fair has been held annually in the month of August, from time immemorial. It probably had its origin in connection with some popish ceremony in honour of Mary Magdalene. The Sabbath immediately preceding the fair was for generations spent in dissipation and vice. A foot-ball was prepared for the occasion, and became an object of fierce contention between the men of Preston and those of Hedon. It was tossed

up in the field in which the fair was held, and then a bloody struggle began between the contending parties. It was customary for them to get their shoes toed with hard leather or steel for the purpose of striking more effectively against each other's legs. Mangled flesh and broken bones, producing shrieks and groans from the injured parties, and exciting fiendish pleasure among others, were quite common. Brutal and cruel fights were often numerous, and the whole country was filled with most unhallowed excitement. Even women, forgetful of the duties of their sex, urged on the parties of their respective villages to strive for the mastery. While the air was rent with oaths and imprecations, female voices were heard crying out alternately, "Now Preston!" "Now Hedon!" The triumphant party kicked the ball into the village to which they belonged, and sent it through the window of the first public-house which they found without the shutters closed. When the foot-ball arrived at Preston during divine service, farmers might be seen hurrying out of church to share in the foolish triumph; and even the clergyman, at the close of the service, would give the foot-ball players money for drink. It was among such half-civilised men, and on a Sabbath devoted to such cruel sports and godless practices, that the preachers and friends from Hull went to hold their first camp-meeting at this place. It required no little courage to carry the gospel into the very midst of crowds of men so godless and desperate, but the faith and fortitude of the brethren were equal to the task. They came in a waggon, drove it into the field in which the fair was held, and boldly encountered the opposition which awaited them. A number of the rabble strove to the utmost to upset the waggon, and got under one side of it for the purpose. The friends did their best on the opposite side to prevent it. Between the two parties the waggon was for some time rocked like a cradle, or tossed like a vessel in a storm. The wicked, however, failed to upset it, and the brethren succeeded in holding a camp-meeting according to their purpose, though one of the preachers had his coat-laps torn off, which were thrown high up into the air. Many

were convinced of sin, and a good work broke out in the neighbourhood. Mr. Clowes preached in the street at Preston some time after, when the singular circumstances occurred which he thus narrates in his journal:—"I preached in the open-air from the words, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink; he that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' It having been a dry summer, and there being a great want of rain, an old woman who was standing by when I delivered my text, when she heard 'rivers of living water' mentioned, ran down the village, and told the people that the waters had broken out against old Pallister's house, and everybody might have some. On this the people flocked up to see the wonder, but they found that the waters that had broken out were 'living waters,' and at that time they were flowing very freely. Several were under conviction, and one man lying on a heap of stones just by was crying to God with all his might."

The "old Mr. Pallister" just mentioned was a warm friend of the infant cause, and was made a constable before the next Magdalen fair arrived. He issued bills against the custom of playing at foot-ball on the Sabbath; and as many disregarded his warning, he brought some of the ring-leaders before the magistrates, and thus gave a check to the demoralizing practice. The gospel, too, exerted an elevating and transforming influence, and gradually prepared the way for the entire abolition of the wicked customs before named, which took place some years afterwards, partly by the exertions of another pious constable. We are chiefly indebted for the foregoing account to Mr. Peter Jackson, a well-known local preacher at Preston, who was present at the first camp-meeting held there, and witnessed all the scenes we have just described.

Scarborough and the vicinity are the next places we have to notice. Mr. Clowes preached his first sermon at Scarborough, in the school-room of a Mr. Lamb, on Saturday evening, January 27th, 1821. It appears from his journals that he was accompanied to this town by Mr. John Coulson, who preached the same evening



as Mr. Clowes, either in another part of the town, or somewhere in the immediate vicinity. "The next morning," says Mr. Clowes, "I spoke twice in the school-room, and once abroad; the gathering of the people was large, and their conduct highly decorus. Several felt the convictions of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, and two or three persons were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. At the conclusion of another preaching service I formed a society of seven members. The next time I preached was on the sands, to a prodigious mass of hearers, many were powerfully moved to seek the Lord, and I joined ten more members to the society. The work now rolled on most gloriously; we very soon had a hundred members in church fellowship, and a new chapel erected."

Proceeding along the coast northwards, he soon extended his missionary labours to Whitby. He appears to have left Scarborough for this latter town on Tuesday, January 30th, three days after he first preached at Scarborough. Passing through Robin Hood's Bay, he was importuned by the people to stop and preach there that night, with a promise that a congregation should soon be gathered. He complied with the request. A congregation assembled that filled three houses which opened into each other, and he stood in the middle house, and preached with effect, one person being induced to enter upon the way to heaven. On Friday, February 2nd, he preached at Lyth, when good was done. On Sunday, 4th, he preached once or twice in the Market-place at Whitby. Multitudes assembled to hear him, more indeed, than could hear him without difficulty; and, notwithstanding the coldness of the weather, "the people remained immoveable to the end of the service. Some of the baser sort," he says, "endeavoured to create disturbance; however, I was honoured with the presence of the chief constable, who kept the sons of Belial at bay. This constable having heard me preach in the open-air in the neighbourhood of York, whilst he was bringing prisoners to the castle in that city, his heart was touched; and he then told me that if ever I went to Whitby his house should be open for me. I now found him as good as his word; he not only protected me,

but made me welcome to his house and table."

Mr. Clowes preached at Whitby again on Sunday, February 18th; in the morning in the New Market, and in the afternoon in a large room. "I now formed a society," he says, "and the work broke forth like a mountain torrent. In a short time we had upwards of one hundred persons in society, and a new chapel erected."

At Cloughton, Mr. Clowes preached in a school-room, and many went through curiosity to hear him. Many were deeply affected under his powerful preaching, and some even fell to the ground. Various opinions were formed respecting the preacher among his hearers. Some declared he was drunk, others that he was a fool, and some that he was a merry-andrew. Not a few, however, felt that the gospel he preached was the power of God unto salvation; and the Wesleyans reaped much fruit from his labours, their class speedily rising from eight to about thirty members. Mr. Clowes also preached with success at Friup, Moorsholm, Hainsthorp, and Sandsend. At Ayton he occupied a barn, which was so crowded that he could hardly get in. Many persecutors were present, and were evidently determined to cause great confusion; but Mr. Clowes waited upon the Lord, inwardly praying that he would rebuke their fury, and they became comparatively calm. A society of twenty members was soon raised up here, and a new chapel speedily erected.

Malton branch of Hull circuit was also very prosperous this year. The work of God progressed encouragingly at Pickering; and on April 22nd, 1821, a commodious new chapel was opened. The society at Kirbymoorside, and those at many other places, realised considerable accessions to their members; and from December, 1820, to March, 1821, 239 members were added in the branch.

Tadcaster mission appears to have been opened during this year, and to have presented an encouraging prospect.

Mr. N. West was sent on a mission to the neighbourhood of this town in the spring of 1820. He arrived at Tadcaster June 1st, and in the month of September following 139 members had

been gathered into church fellowship; and on the 17th of the same month a new chapel was opened in the town. Several of the places had probably been visited before, and religious impressions made upon the minds of many persons; but the societies appear not to have been organized before the quarter just named.

York branch of Hull circuit seems also to have made considerable advancement during the winter of 1820-1821. Mr. John Hutchinson, then a young man of superior abilities and of ardent zeal, records the success of his labours at Bramham, Appleton, Cattal, Walton, Huby, Aston, and Flaxton. In the city of York the congregations had often been disturbed by godless persecutors. It is pleasing to find the following testimony to the liberality and condescension of a nobleman. "Sunday, March 4th, 1821," says Mr. Hutchinson, "I preached in the evening at York to a numerous and an attentive congregation, supposed to contain 1,200 people. We had more peace this evening than ever before. Perhaps this was owing to the extraordinary and Christian-like exertions of Lord Dundas, the present Lord Mayor of York. His lordship hearing how we were molested, was determined we should have the peace and quietness which the laws of our highly favoured country allow. He condescended personally to attend divine service among us, and his presence caused such stillness as I never before witnessed in York."

We close our account of the prosperity of Hull circuit, during this connexional year, with the following letter from Mr. Clowes to Mr. Thomas Woodnorth, his friend and brother-in-law. Under date of March 21st, 1821, he writes,—"Dear Brother Woodnorth, the last I dated to thee was from Bridlington. From that time to the quarter-day, March 13th, 1821, I was employed on a mission by the sea side, as far as Whitby, and beyond, exposed to all that belongs to a missionary life. But thanks be to God, He supported me, and gave me to see of the fruits of my labours in the conviction and conversion of sinners. At Scarborough, Robin Hood's Bay, and Whitby, I had to preach in the open-air, although the weather was cold; at Scarborough, by the water side to multitudes of people, who behaved well, and appeared truly affected under the

word. At Whitby I preached in the New Market-place to more than could well hear me. Our way is open by the sea side from Spurn Point to beyond Whitby, and a good work is rolling on. At Flamborough we are building a chapel, and I expect several more to be built in that district very soon. When I look at the work in Yorkshire it is amazing to me; many chapels are built, and the land is generally covered with living churches; hundreds and thousands of souls have been brought to God. I said in my last that we had had 700 increase of members during the preceding quarter, but the quarter just closed is 1,714! The total number of members in the circuit now is 4,845, and we have about forty travelling preachers."

The conference, or second annual meeting, was held at Tunstall, Staffordshire, and commenced May 2nd, 1821. The delegates were entertained with great kindness by the inhabitants, and the religious services, both at Tunstall and other places, were very powerful. Messrs. Clowes and King were appointed to preach at Tunstall, on behalf of a new chapel there, the first having become too small. Mr. Clowes preached in the afternoon of Sunday, May 6th, "and in the middle of my discourse," he says, "the work broke out. The cries of penitents and the rejoicings of believers were so great that I desisted discoursing, and we carried on a mighty praying service till six o'clock, and it was supposed that twenty souls found pardoning mercy through the blood of the Lamb. At night, brother King preached, and the converting work still went forward."

The connexion was found to be in a very prosperous state. It now contained sixteen circuits, namely, Tunstall, Nottingham, Loughborough, Hull, Scotter, Sheffield, Derby, Darlaston, Lincoln, Grimsby, Brotherton, Pocklington, Hutton Rudby, Barnsley, Macclesfield, and Manchester. The number of members was 16,394, having been more than doubled during the year, the increase being 8,552. At this conference it was agreed to establish a Book-room and a Printing-press, which regulation was speedily carried into effect at Bemersley, chiefly through the energy of Messrs. H. and J. Bourne.

CHAPTER XII.

Progress of Tunstall Circuit.—Shropshire Mission.—Opening of Liverpool.—Successful efforts in Cambridgeshire.—Progress of Manchester Circuit.—Missionaries sent into Norfolk.—Great success at Lynn and other places.—Introduction of the Primitive Methodists into Huntingdonshire.—Missionary efforts at Darlington and other places in the County of Durham.—Missionary efforts in Northumberland.—Opening of South Shields and Sunderland.—Opening of Halifax.—Imprisonment of Messrs. HOLLIDAY and REVEL.—Opening of Bradford and other places.

IN the foregoing chapter we detailed the progress of the denomination in the connexional year of 1820-1821, the most prosperous year it had then realised. In this we proceed to narrate its advancement during the following year, which, happily, was one of similar prosperity. The connexion was divided into five districts at the conference of 1821, namely, those of Tunstall, Nottingham, Hull, Scotter, and Sheffield. We shall furnish the progress of each district in order, as far as we are able. We begin with Tunstall circuit. From a letter contained in the Connexional Magazine for 1821, we learn that this circuit then extended its labours into some parts of Shropshire which had not previously been visited by any of its missionaries. Under date of August 20th, 1821, Mr. T. Sugden writes to the circuit authorities:—"Dear Brethren, This is to inform you that I have got no further than Newport (in Shropshire), and the villages thereabout. I have established preaching for one week about Newport, and intend [to devote] the other week [to the places] about Gnosall, so that the places may have preaching once a fortnight. The Lord is with me, and gives me favour in the eyes of the people.

When I entered Newport I got it [the preaching] cried by the bellman, and we had a large company. On Sunday I spoke in the market-hall to about a thousand people, and many were affected. To-day a man came trembling to me to inquire what he must do to be saved; and in the villages where the gospel has not been preached hundreds of persons come to hear the word. They say such things have not been witnessed in this vicinity before. I believe I shall be able to form societies if you continue to pray for me and for the work of the Lord. O what an open door there is in this dark part of the country!"

The immediate neighbourhood of Newport, and the villages about Gnosall, were no doubt then worthy of being called a "dark part of the country," for, with the exception of the town of Newport, there was little or no evangelical preaching therein; and the inhabitants were mostly groping their way, in affecting ignorance, to the eternal world. But though considerable good was affected under the zealous labours of the Primitive Methodist missionaries, the results were not so great as the prospects given in the foregoing letter would warrant one to expect. A few miles further south, however, the missionaries reaped an abundant harvest of precious souls among the men employed in the mines and iron-works of the district. From some poetical effusions by Mr. W. Sanders, we learn that he preached with effect at Lilleshall, Donnington, and Coalpit Bank, in the autumn of 1821; and he and his fellow-labourers had abundant success at Wrockwardine Wood, Oaken Gates, and other places in the mining district of Shropshire. The following letter from Mr. James Bonser, to Tunstall circuit authorities, will show the prosperity of the work of God in this neighbourhood:—

"Oaken Gates, May 4th, 1822.

"Dear Brethren,—This is to inform you that we have agreed to have a camp-meeting here on Sunday, the 19th instant. If you can make it convenient to send us a little help, we shall be thankful. If it be a fine day, I expect there will be ten thousand people present. We have a glorious work going on here. I

preached last Sunday at Oaken Gates to near two thousand people. On the following morning several persons found peace at a prayer meeting, and at night several more. I have preached at several fresh places, and formed five fresh classes at new places. I never before saw the fields so ripe for the harvest. I have opened as many places as we can well supply; and people want us at other places. We are actively employed in the work almost from nine o'clock in the morning till ten at night. I preached on Wednesday night, for the first time, at the Old Park, when six persons found peace; and two more found peace at a prayer-meeting next morning."

Mr. Hugh Bourne responded to the call for assistance at the forenamed camp-meeting, and published the following account of it in the Connexional Magazine for September, 1822:—

"Oaken Gates is situated in the iron-works and colliery district of Shropshire, and is a very populous neighbourhood. Tunstall circuit has had a very successful mission here, which is now made into a branch. The Word of God has run very rapidly; many have been truly turned to the Lord, and an extensive reformation has taken place among the people. With some difficulty I got to go to the camp-meeting, held there on the 19th of May. I was on the ground a little before nine o'clock in the morning. The preachers were then very active making preparations; and two waggons were conveniently fixed, as it was expected that during the day two preaching stands might be wanted. About nine the meeting commenced with a general praying service for about half-an-hour. The congregation was large, and the people came in very fast. A preaching service then commenced, and the word was with power and effect. About a quarter past ten the preaching service closed, and the praying companies drew out and took their stations. There was a vast concourse of people, and the scene was grand and majestic. This was the first camp-meeting ever held in these parts, yet the praying companies drew out in as complete order as if they had been accustomed to it. The exercises were with power. The Lord made bare His arm: souls were in

distress in several of the companies, and several were brought into liberty. In the afternoon thousands were present, and two preaching stands were occupied. The last time the praying companies were out was a very powerful one; and at the first stand there still remained about a thousand persons who had not room to go out. A praying service was held for these, and after some time a general cry for mercy was heard among them, but how many got liberty could not be fully ascertained."

The spot usually occupied by the missionaries for a preaching place at Oaken Gates was an open space near the centre of the village, called "the bull-ring," where thousands of guilty and depraved beings frequently rioted in the brutal sport of bull-baiting. In this well-known place, where vice of every kind had often been committed without a blush, the zealous missionaries unfurled the blood-stained banner of the cross, and pointed sinners to the Lamb of God. Their plain and powerful addresses were accompanied with the mighty energy of the Holy Spirit; many hardened sinners were awakened to a sense of their lost condition, and some who had been ring-leaders in wickedness became champions in the cause of Christ. A society was soon formed, and the work of God continued to prosper there and in the neighbourhood. A chapel was wanted, and a building site was sought at Oaken Gates, but through the influence of the parish minister the attempt to secure one was unsuccessful. At Wrockwardine Wood, however, about a mile distant, land was given by Mr. Amphlett, and a spacious chapel was soon erected. A large congregation attended and a flourishing society was established, which exerted a salutary influence on the surrounding neighbourhood. This place afterwards became the head of a respectable circuit, and continues such to the present. At Oaken Gates, too, a most eligible building site was ultimately obtained, close by the "bull-ring," on which a commodious chapel was erected, for which a railway company paid a considerable sum of money, and thereby enabled the trustees to erect a much larger one in a most prominent position, and to place it in easy circumstances.

At many other places in this populous district the missionaries were made an abundant blessing to the people; and the societies established were not only able soon to support their own preachers and meet all other necessary expenses, but also to extend the labours of the connexion to more distant places, of which mention will be made in another chapter.

While Tunstall circuit was carrying on successful missionary operations in Shropshire, it appears to have been labouring with good effect in Lancashire. The populous town of Liverpool was visited with success by missionaries from Tunstall circuit, in the year 1821, if not earlier. Mr. Clowes, we have previously had occasion to notice, preached in this large town many years before this time, but he does not appear to have repeated his visit, nor to have established regular preaching services there. In 1821 it was supplied with preaching by Preston Brook and Burland branches conjointly. Mr. James Bonser arrived there on Saturday, January 12th, 1822, and on the following day he commenced his labours. He says, "At half-past seven in the morning, I attended a prayer meeting, then gave two exhortations in the open-air. At two o'clock led a class. At six, I preached in the chapel. Many appeared to be much affected, and some cried for mercy. On Tuesday, 15th, I preached again in the chapel, when one or two professed to find peace, and appeared to rejoice in God.

"Sunday, January 20th. At half-past seven attended a prayer-meeting. At half-past ten, I preached in the open-air at another place. At two I led the class, and joined six members to it. At six, I preached in the chapel, and one person professed to find pardon.

"Tuesday, January 29th. I preached again. Several were in distress and cried for mercy, and one professed to find peace.

"Sunday, February 3rd. At six preached in the chapel. Several cried for mercy, and two professed to obtain pardon."

These brief notices contain all the information we have obtained from published accounts respecting the early labours of the con-

nexion in this populous town. But we have received some additional information from Mr. John Ride, which we here subjoin. Wishful to promote the conversion of the most careless and thoughtless sinners in the town, he stood up in the open-air for the purpose of proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ, when he was arrested by a civil officer, and lodged in Bridewell. The rumour of his imprisonment spread rapidly, and, it is said, came to the ears of the late Dr. A. Clarke, who felt deeply on the occasion, and addressed an earnest and powerful letter on the subject to the magistrates of Liverpool. This letter Mr. Ride believed, produced a deep and beneficial influence upon those gentlemen. Be this as it might, when Mr. R. was brought before them, he was honourably acquitted, and permitted henceforth to preach in the open-air without interruption. These circumstances probably occurred in the autumn of 1821. We are unable, however, to determine what amount of success Mr. R. and others of his brethren realized in this large town in the beginning of their labours in it.

We must now turn in an opposite direction to notice more of the extensive missionary operations of Tunstall circuit. In August 1821, we find Mr. Joseph Reynolds, one of its missionaries, labouring with great zeal and success at Cambridge and other places in the neighbourhood. Under date of August 8th, 1821, he writes to Tunstall circuit committee:—

"Dear Brethren,—When I left Tunstall, I gave myself up to labour and sufferings, and I have gone through both; but praise the Lord, it has been for His glory and the good of souls. My sufferings are known only to God and myself. I have many times been knocked down while preaching, and have often had sore bones. Once I was knocked down, and was trampled under the feet of the crowd, and had my clothes torn, and all my money taken from me. In consequence of this I have been obliged to suffer much hunger. One day I travelled near thirty miles and had only a penny cake to eat. I preached at night to near two thousand persons. But I was so weak when I had done, that I could

scarcely stand. I then made my supper of cold cabbage, and slept under a haystack in a field till about four o'clock in the morning. The singing of the birds then awoke me, and I arose and went into the town, and preached at five to many people. I afterwards came to Cambridge, where I have been a fortnight, and preached to a great congregation, though almost worn out with fatigue and hunger. To-day I was glad to eat the pea-husks as I walked on the road. But I bless God that much good has been done. I believe hundreds will have to bless him in eternity for leading me hither. Cambridge is a large county town, and has hundreds of ministers in it; yet there is little evangelical preaching, and thousands of its inhabitants are living in iniquity. I have suffered a little persecution, but it is now abating, and thousands flock to hear the word. Souls have been converted every day, and I have been called up in a morning to pray with persons who have been wrestling all night with the Lord for the pardon of their sins. I may also say that God has been saving by whole families. One day I prayed in a house to which I had been invited, and all the family, including three servants as well as near relatives found the Lord. I cannot fully describe what a work there is about Cambridge. Letters have been sent to me to visit more places than I could attend, and many persons have desired to be joined in society. O what has God done, and what may He still do, if these labours be followed up." Under date of August 21st, he writes again:—

"Dear Brethren,—I received the parcel yesterday containing thirty sets of Magazines, which are nearly all sold. The work of the Lord is going on wonderfully. Last Sunday, I formed a society at Barnwell, containing twenty-five persons. In the morning at seven o'clock we held a prayer-meeting, and several found the Lord. At half-past ten I preached at Hornsley, about four miles from Cambridge, in a place which will hold near four hundred people, which a gentleman has fitted up for us. The people came in cart loads, and it was a very powerful time; many were deeply convinced of sin. At half-past three I preached at



well to a great congregation. A report having been circulated e country that some persons were going to take me to prison, y came out of curiosity, but they went away much affected. ix o'clock I preached at Cambridge to above two thousand le, when great numbers were wounded by the two-edged d of the Spirit. Many of the worst of sinners are deeply inced, and are seeking mercy. One gentleman and his wife been converted, and their servant is greatly concerned for his

I have not formed a society at Cambridge yet, but some are ing to unite with us. Our friends are drinking into the itive Methodist spirit, and our prayer meetings are like a heaven."

is to be regretted that the progress of Primitive Methodism ambridge and its vicinity did not for many years equal the ex- tions which, from the foregoing extracts, appear to have been rtained by Mr. R. Cambridge, however, soon after the dates in the extracts, became a branch of the Nottingham circuit, was made into a separate circuit, perhaps prematurely, in ch, 1824.

e must close our notice, for the present, of the progress of tall circuit with observing, that during this connexional year er and Burton-upon-Trent branches were made into separate its.

ssing by Darlaston and Macclesfield circuits, of whose pro- we find no record during this year, we come to Manchester, the fourth and last circuit in Tunstall district, and shall ly chronicle some of its enterprising efforts and its cheering ss. The circuit extended its labours to many of the sur- ding towns in the district, and realized considerable accessions e number of its members.

e first sermon preached at Ashton-under-Lyne by the onaries of the connexion was at the market-cross, on Sunday, 27th, 1821, when no interruption appears to have occurred. while one of the preachers was preaching in the open-air on ay, July 8th, to a large assembly, a constable appeared and

ordered him to desist, and because the preacher refused to obey his mandate, this haughty official knocked him down, tore his coat, and threatened to take him to prison. Rescued from his power by the interference of the people, the preacher stood up again and finished his discourse with great liberty to an augmented congregation. On the 12th of the same month, however, the preacher and an associate were summoned before the magistrates at Oldham, under the charge of having disturbed the peaceable inhabitants of Ashton on the 8th. They pleaded their own cause, and affirmed that they would cheerfully endure bonds and imprisonment rather than cease to preach the gospel in the open-air to the multitudes of precious souls who chose to hear them. They were ultimately liberated on giving bail to appear at the quarter sessions, and the magistrates and preachers then parted in a friendly manner. We hear no more of this case, and judge that it was allowed to drop.

Mr. S. Waller, however, a cotton-spinner, and a local preacher, resident at Manchester, did not so easily escape. He preached at Ashton on Sunday evening, June 17th, 1821, and was grossly interrupted by a subordinate constable, who on not being able to prevent Mr. Waller from preaching took down his name. On the following Thursday Mr. Waller had to appear before the magistrates at Oldham, to answer to the charge of preaching in the open-air at Ashton-under-Lyne, and of thereby annoying and injuring His Majesty's liege subjects in that place. Mr. Waller pleaded his own cause, but was required to give bail to appear at the sessions at Salford. The trial took place on July 23rd, 1821, when two counselors were engaged in Mr. Waller's defence; but through the false depositions of the wicked constable and another person, and partly, perhaps, through prejudice, the jury brought in Mr. Waller guilty of obstructing the highway. A very severe sentence was then passed upon him, namely, to be imprisoned three months, and to give security to keep the peace for two years. In his imprisonment he was soon taken severely ill, and suffered much through the neglect of the prison doctor, so that his life was

perilled. But through the kind interference of many respect-
e friends of different denominations he was removed to a
nfortable room in the prison, and was permitted to have his
n bed there. His own medical adviser and a physician also
ended him two or three times a day for some time, and ulti-
tely he recovered. Many of his christian friends met him at
› prison gates on the day of his liberation; and at a meeting
d in Chancery-lane, Manchester, the day after his discharge, it
s reported that his imprisonment had been a means of stirring
many to hear the word of God, and of greatly advancing the
deemer's kingdom.

A preaching-room was fitted up at Ashton soon after Mr.
aller's trial, and liberal aid afforded towards it by many of the
abitants. "On Tuesday, August 14th, I went to Ashton,"
s Mr. Verity, "to solicit assistance in the fitting up of a room
our religious services. Although we have suffered much per-
ution here, the people are now coming forward to fit us up a
ce of worship, and the work of God is going on well. The
rd makes the wrath of man to praise him."

About the time that the missionaries began their evangelistic
ours at Ashton-under-Lyne, they also commenced operations at
› neighbouring town of Staley Bridge, now the head of a circuit.
e of them preached there on Sunday afternoon, July 8th, before
ng to Ashton in the evening, when a large congregation assem-
d, and "evident good was done;" and a society of eight
mbers was formed there on the following Sunday.

Bolton, too, was visited near the same time, and a great im-
ssion made upon the inhabitants. Thousands of persons are
orted to have flocked to hear the preachers in the open-air. In
› morning of July 1st "about two thousand persons" assembled
the purpose; in the afternoon about four thousand collected at
stocks, and three or four thousand in the evening; while the
e missionary preached in the open-air at Hay Brow, in the
ediate neighbourhood. On the following day he preached in
open-air in a large timber yard to "about three thousand

persons," when the Lord assisted him "in a wonderful manner, and there was a mighty shaking among the people." On the Tuesday he preached at the Vitriol Houses to about two thousand, when "the word reached many hearts, and sixteen persons united in church fellowship."

The late Mr. John Verity also frequently preached at Bolton to thousands of persons, and was favoured with considerable success. In August he collected money there towards fitting up a large room for preaching in, and was much encouraged by the liberality of the people. Among the rest a number of mechanics, who were about to spend sixteen shillings in drink in what is called a "footing," the introduction of a workman into their shop, resolved to devote the amount to assist "the poor Ranters" in fitting up a room for worship, instead of spending it according to the drinking custom of the county, as they had at first intended to do. The progress of the good work at Bolton may be inferred from the fact that the society already comprised nine classes, containing in all one hundred and sixty members.

The missionaries first visited Rochdale on Sunday, July 15th, 1821. One of them, assisted by three friends, sang up the street, and he preached to a large congregation at five o'clock, when some persons were brought to the Lord.

At this time, too, the preachers seem to have laboured at Oldham with great success. "Sunday, September 2nd, 1821," says Mr. Verity, "I preached at Oldham both afternoon and evening, and thousands crowded to hear the word of life in the open-air: and a life-giving word it proved—one mourner got liberty, two backsliders were reclaimed, and seven united in society with us. Monday, 3rd, I spoke again at Oldham, two or three persons found liberty, two backsliders were restored, and eleven persons joined our society.

The places previously named, Ashton, Staley Bridge, Bolton, Oldham, and others in the vicinity, were then all included in Manchester circuit, which at that time was making rapid progress. "Monday, September 17th," says Mr. Verity, I attended the

quarter-day. Peace and harmony generally prevailed, and in this small circuit we had been favoured with an increase of three hundred and nineteen members for the quarter."

During the remainder of this connexional year the circuit appears to have made still further progress, if not with such rapidity as in the quarter just noticed. According to the first minute-book of Manchester circuit, there was the following number of members at the respective towns we have named:—Manchester 211, Ashton 48, Staley Bridge 48, Mumps and Oldham 160, Bolton 321, Rochdale 40, Stockport 22, and Bury, which probably had just been opened, 6. The number of members at the smaller places we do not give, for the sake of brevity.

We here conclude for the present our notice of Tunstall district, and proceed to record the progress of Nottingham district. We find no published account of the progress of Nottingham circuit during this connexional year, but we gather some information upon the subject from official documents, sent thirty years ago to the General Committee by Messrs. Oscroft and Charlton. The former of these brethren says, "When I commenced travelling [in May, 1821] Boston was then a branch of Nottingham circuit. In a fortnight after beginning to travel I was sent to labour in that branch. About six weeks afterwards Boston was made a circuit, and Spalding branch became a branch of Nottingham circuit. I was appointed to labour in this branch with five other preachers, though at this time there was not sufficient work for two. We therefore opened a mission in the county of Norfolk, where the work of the Lord spread rapidly, and hundreds were soon converted to God. In April, 1822, a plan was printed which contained fifty-seven places at which we preached, though we had then been labouring on this mission only about ten months." The important town of Lynn, in the western division of Norfolk, was the first, or one of the first, places visited by the missionaries in this county; and from a note addressed to Mr. W. G. Bellham by Mr. S. Wilkinson, published in the life of Mr. Bellham by Mr. O. Jackson, they appear to have laboured there with great effect. In

this note Mr. W. says, "The Primitive Methodists are carrying all before them in Lynn." This brief quotation is doubtless hyperbolical, but after making all necessary deductions from its strong proverbial language, it is sufficient to prove that a deep and wide impression was made upon the inhabitants by the evangelical labours of the zealous missionaries.

In an article in the denominational magazine for March, 1852, it is stated that the missionaries visited Wisbech in Cambridgeshire, and the neighbouring places in the year 1821. They began their labours by preaching in the open-air in the horse-fair, where they met with much opposition and persecution. Their success for a time was not very great, and their first preaching room not very splendid. An old tinker was converted under their ministry, and he opened his little cottage for their religious services. A barn was subsequently occupied, and then an old loft was taken on rent. The small society, however, contained several members who continued steadfast, and have long rendered good service to the cause. Among these may be named Mr. Gubbins, Mrs. Miller, and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, all old and respected office-bearers, and the two latter well known in the district for their hospitality and christian kindness. Further notices of Wisbech and of the missionary operations of Wisbech circuit will be found in succeeding portions of this volume.

But while the work of God was rapidly advancing in the mission field in Norfolk, unpleasant circumstances occured in the home branch of the circuit, especially in the town of Nottingham, which greatly impeded its prosperity. "I was taken out to travel by the Nottingham circuit, at the September quarter-day, 1821," says Mr. Thomas Charlton, "and commenced my labours October 1st. The day following, a division took place in the society. We lost nine local preachers and a great number of members, and for some time the preaching room in Broad Marsh." The cause of this division is not assigned; and we have found no information respecting it in addition to that just given. The society which remained, though weakened for the time, appears, however, soon to



e recovered from the injury it had sustained. Mr. Charlton s, "but it pleased the Lord to revive His work, so that our was soon repaired."

We have nothing further to record respecting the progress of ttingham circuit during this year, but Boston circuit, now made n Nottingham circuit, appears to have extended its missionary rations into Huntingdonshire, in the autumn of 1821. Mr. Dawson says, "Sunday, September 2nd, 1821, I spoke to a ge congregation in the Market-place at Huntingdon, the county n of Huntingdonshire. Both rich and poor came to hear; ne of whom mocked, and some wept. At two, I spoke at dmanchester, and many people attended. At six, T. Steele, n Tunstall, spoke at Huntingdon, together with a blind young n, out of Cheshire. Saturday, 8th, I spoke at Godmanchester, l afterwards held a prayer-meeting. The Lord was in the lst, and I formed a society of seven members."

Loughborough and Derby circuits were all the circuits in ttingham district, at this time, besides those we have already iced. We find no account of the former circuit for this year; from extracts from the journal of Mr. George Appleby, blished in the connexional magazine, we learn that Derby uit was in a prosperous state. In September, 1821, a flourish- society was formed at Ockbrook, and a powerful camp-meeting held there in the following month, at which ten persons were verted to God.

Hull circuit, as in former years made rapid progress, and greatly arged its borders. In the spring or summer of 1821, Mr. wes appears to have extended his missionary labours into the nty of Durham, making the town of Darlington the centre of operations,—but whether he was the first missionary sent ner, we cannot say. The late Mr. S. Laister preached here as ly as May 6th, 1821. Mr. Clowes says, "I stood forth out of rs in North-gate, and addressed a very attentive congregation, ny of whom appeared much affected. The same day, I went to gleton a distance of eight miles. After singing up the street, I



delivered a short exhortation, and then held a prayer-meeting at the house of William Young, where much good was done. On Monday evening I spoke again, when a cry for mercy was heard, and I formed a society of fifteen members. The night following I was at Cockfield, and preached abroad. At Ingleton I preached again, and another person joined our society.

"The next Sunday, I preached morning and afternoon at Darlington: at the latter service it was computed that 2,000 persons were present. I afterwards walked to Ingleton where I preached again, and then led the class. This was a day of much labour, but of great delight. The next night I was at Cockfield, and the night after at Evenwood, where a soul was made free. At Summer-house I stood up in the open-air. On the Sunday following, I preached in Bond-gate, Darlington, and at Ingleton at night, where I gave tickets to a society of twenty members. Next day I was at Cockfield, and the evening after at Evenwood, where I formed a society of four. I also preached at Shildon, where God was powerfully felt in the midst of us; and at Long Newton, where the word was clothed with the power of the Highest."

The labours of Mr. Clowes at Darlington, and other places in the vicinity, were crowned with his wonted success; flourishing societies were established, and in accordance with his prudent advice, they liberally contributed towards the support of the mission, so that the expense which had to be borne by the circuit was but trifling. In September, 1821, Mr. F. N. Jersey was sent to assist Mr. Clowes in the Darlington mission, and with his zealous aid its borders were enlarged and several new places opened. At Bishop Auckland Mr. Clowes preached in an upper room, the floor of which was much decayed, and during the service the props under the floor gave way, and produced some alarm. No bodily injury, however, was sustained, though the occurrence lessened the effect which the service would otherwise have produced. The Darlington mission became extensive. It extended eastwards to Stockton-on-Tees, and towards the north-west

to Wolsingham. The entrance to these towns is thus noticed briefly by Mr. Laister. "Sunday, May 13th, 1821, I preached at two o'clock and at six at Stockton-upon-Tees. A cold, hard place, where we have no society. Sunday, July 15th. We had a camp-meeting at Stockton. The day was wet and unfavourable; but I belive Stockton, hard as it was, has not forgotten that day's labour. Souls have since been saved.

"August 9th, 1821, I spoke at Wolsingham, near the bridge, to a very large congregation. This is a new place; but a society is formed, and the prospect is very good." Both Stockton and Wolsingham have since become the head of a circuit.

At the close of the March quarter, 1822, the missionaries were happy to find 508 members in society, and more money had been raised than paid their salaries. Such was the success with which the Great Head of the Church was pleased to bless the zealous efforts of the preachers at Darlington, and such the favour shewn them by many of the inhabitants, that in a short time a spacious chapel was erected, which was opened for public worship by Mr. Clowes, March 3rd, 1822, Mr. Jersey preaching out of doors to those who could not get into the chapel.

While Messrs. Laister and Evans were labouring with success in Darlington branch, they received several invitations to visit Barnard Castle. "Sunday, August 12th, 1821," says Mr. Laister, "I spoke at Darlington and the Lord blest many souls. But the preaching-place would not hold half the congregation, and there began to be a stir about a chapel. While discussions about a chapel were going on, I thought we would make a push to take Barnard Castle. As we had many invitations, brother Evans went to see what kind of an opening there was; and he preached in the Market-place, and published for me to be there the fortnight after. I accordingly went, and spoke to many hundreds of well-behaved people, and then formed a society of nine members. We attended the place about two months, and then had a society of about eighty members." Mr. Laister, whose ministerial course was a short but useful one, laboured in this town with

great success. In four months the society rose to 120 members.

Early in the year 1822, the missionary efforts of Hull circuit extended into Northumberland. Mr. William Morris, who was among the oldest members and first local preachers at Tunstall, in Staffordshire, and Mr. John Bagshaw, a native of the same place, had removed to Newcastle-on-Tyne for the sake of employment. There being no Primitive Methodists then in Newcastle, they united with the Wesleyans, but retained a strong affection for their old friends, and often spoke to their new associates in glowing language of the zealous and successful labours of Messrs. Clowes and Bourne and their fellow-labourers. While Mr. Clowes was travelling in Darlington branch, he paid Mr. Morris a visit according to his request, and preached in the open-air at Ballast Hills, on the ascension of Christ. His flaming zeal and pointed speech are said to have rivetted the attention of his hearers, and the mighty influence which accompanied his word to have awed their minds and deeply moved their hearts. This sermon was preached by Mr. Clowes in the autumn of 1821, and he began regular missionary operations in Northumberland early in 1822. The precise date is given in extracts from his journal, published in the connexional magazine for the year. He says, "January 28th, 1822, I received a letter from Newcastle-on-Tyne to visit North Shields, and as I had a few days at liberty I went over. The person who had sent for me was Joseph Peart, of Chirton. He received me kindly, and at night I preached at North Shields to a crowded congregation, and one soul got convinced. February 4th, I preached again at North Shields, and at night joined a society of three.

"Sunday, February 10th. I preached at North Shields in the morning, and the Lord was among us: and again in the evening, which was a powerful time, many persons were in distress, and two professed to find liberty. Monday, 11th. I preached at Howden Pans to about a thousand persons, and the power of God was present. I trust much good will be done here. Wednesday 13th. I preached at Blyth, a sea-port town, about

eighteen miles beyond Newcastle. There appears to be an opening here; I preached twice, and some of the people are disposed to unite with us. Sunday, 17th. I preached again at North Shields, and joined about nine more to the society. I had a gracious day from the presence of the Lord. Monday, 18th. I formed a class at the upper end of the town." During this visit to Northumberland, Mr. Clowes said, "I think we are now likely to spread through the North, but whether swiftly or not I cannot say." Such, however, was the prospect of success, that Hull circuit's March quarterly meeting resolved to prosecute the mission in Northumberland with much vigour. Under date of March 20th, 1822, Mr. R. Jackson says, in a letter to Mr. H. Bourne, "we are going to send three preachers into Northumberland this quarter." From the same letter we learn that Mr. Clowes had left Hull for this scene of labour two days before. But as the societies raised after this date would not be included in the number of members reported to the conference of 1822, we shall defer to the next chapter our notice of the further progress of this mission.

While Hull circuit was extending its borders into the counties of Durham and Northumberland, it was also pushing forward its missionary operations into Craven, the most western hundred of the West-riding of Yorkshire, and also into many places in Lancashire. The rapid spread of the Primitive Methodists in Craven may be inferred from the following brief extract from a letter to Mr. H. Bourne, dated Hull, March 20th, 1822: "Last March or April we sent one preacher to Skipton [the chief market town in Craven] on a mission, and now we have stationed eight preachers in that part." The late Mr. John Hewson and his fellow labourers were made extensively useful at Silsden, (where Mr. John Flesher united with the society,) Keighley, and many other places in the district. About the same time, or soon afterwards, the late Mr. Thomas Batty visited the neighbourhood, and was eminently successful in bringing souls to Christ. Writing to Mr. Flesher, Mr. Batty says, "your respected father welcomed

to his house and table those of us who were among the first that visited Silsden. Then he permitted us to occupy his barn as a temporary chapel, although the streets were generally our battle ground. What a birth-place for souls was that barn!" Referring to the powerful meetings then held at Silsden, Mr. Flesher says, "we remember that on one evening *forty-four* sinners were pricked in their hearts under one sermon." At Keighley, four miles distant, numbers of sinners "were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God," and a mournful circumstance occurred, which was thought by some to threaten the extinction of the society, but which was happily overruled for its benefit and enlargement. "Mr. Batty," says Mr. S. Moore, "laboured hard as a missionary in the streets of Keighley, in the summer of 1821. He preached the gospel faithfully, and was successful in the conversion of sinners. He led the first lovefeast at Keighley, on Sunday, September the 16th, 1821, which was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The meeting was held in a large wool warehouse, three stories high; and just after Mr. Batty had pronounced the benediction at the close of the meeting, the floor suddenly gave way with a tremendous crash, which was heard at a great distance. The scene was most awful: the people fell down into the lower apartments, and the whole place was filled with dust. More than sixty persons were wounded, and their cries, groans, and shrieks were heart-rending. Many were carried away with broken bones and bruised bodies, and the following morning one woman died of her wounds. This terrible catastrophe was regarded by some persons as a judgment of God upon the people, and it was expected that it would ruin the infant cause. But the Lord overruled it for good, and rendered it subservient to the establishment and extension of the society. Numbers were awakened to a sense of their danger, during the alarming occurrence, and afterwards gave their hearts to God, and united with the society, several of whom have since been added to the Church triumphant."

From Craven Mr. Batty went westward to Blackburn and

Preston, in Lancashire. Mr. W. Brining states, "Mr. Batty came to mission Preston in December, 1821. He was the first Primitive Methodist preacher I heard and entertained. I and my father became connected with him in January, 1822, and we took a large room for religious worship, for the rent of which my father became responsible. I and three others were appointed local preachers, and the following March quarter day I was taken out to travel, and stationed at Preston." Favoured with the assistance of Messrs. Brining and Tindall, Mr. Batty extended his missionary labours, and succeeded in forming societies in Blackburn, Accrington, Padiham, and other places, as well as at Preston, and many sinners were turned to God. The following brief extracts from his journal will confirm the foregoing statements. "April 14th, 1822. I preached at Preston at ten and six. Held a prayer-meeting in the room after preaching, when five souls were made happy in the pardoning love of God. There is a good work here; we are increasing in numbers weekly.

"Monday, May 6th. Opened Wigan. Got permission of a gentleman to stand upon a piece of ground belonging to him. I then sent the bellman about, and at seven in the evening preached to about a thousand people. Some backsliders were cut to the heart, and other persons got good. Sunday, 12th, at one, preached at Chorley Cross, to an immense concourse of people, who behaved well. In the evening at six, preached in a room which the players had occupied, which was much crowded. Fourteen persons united in society, and the prospect of great good being done was cheering."

From a brief memorandum found among Mr. Batty's papers we learn, that in the course of seven or eight months about two hundred and thirty souls were brought to God under the labours of the missionaries in this district.

Other parts of Hull circuit also made rapid advancement during this connexional year. In the early part of the year, Leeds branch was made into a separate circuit, with nearly a thousand members. Some months after, Malton and Ripon were also made into circuits; the former with near seven hundred members, and the

latter with above four hundred. And, ere the year closed, York was likewise made into a separate circuit, with above four hundred members.

We find no record of the progress of Pocklington and Brotherton circuits during the year; but Hutton Rudby circuit, which soon afterwards took the name of Brompton circuit, made Guisborough part of it into a circuit, and sent Mr. John Branfoot as a missionary to South Shields, where he met with success.

While Mr. Clowes was visiting North Shields and the neighbouring places on the north side of the Tyne, Mr. Branfoot began his missionary operations on the south side. Under date of February 6th, 1822, Mr. Clowes writes, "I went over the water to hear brother Branfoot, from Hutton Rudby circuit, preach at South Shields. He took this place the week before; if he had not taken it we should have taken it now."

We find little notice respecting the progress of Scotter district during this year; but, from the journal of Mr. W. Fieldsend, it appears that Lincoln circuit was prospering. A powerful camp-meeting was held at Lincoln in June, 1821, when thousands of persons attended, and at which much good was done. Some persecution was endured at Waddington and at Welbourne; but the good work prospered at Horncastle, Donnington, Heckington, Codington, Balderton, and other places.

It remains for us to notice the progress of Sheffield and Barnsley circuits; and with an account of their prosperity and extension, and a brief notice of the Conference of 1822, we shall close this chapter. From the journals of Messrs. Ingram and Brook, it seems that the work of the Lord prospered during the summer of 1821, at Sheffield, Doncaster (where a chapel had been obtained), Rotherham, Wentworth, Carcroft, Brampton, Bolton, Thorp, Braithwell, Wath, Mexbro', and several other places; and a powerful camp-meeting was held on Mexbro' Common, near Doncaster, on Sunday, June 3rd, by Sheffield and Barnsley circuits. The day was fine, the excitement in the country great, and the attendance so numerous that several newspapers reported the number

of persons present to be 20,000. Mr. H. Bourne, in his History of the Connexion, gives a less, and, probably, a more accurate estimate of the number. He says, "This memorable camp-meeting had sixteen praying companies; it was believed that more than 10,000 persons attended, and that hundreds were converted to God."

Another powerful camp-meeting was held in Sheffield circuit about the same time as the fore-named, at Bradwell, in Derbyshire, at which about thirty persons were converted.

Other parts of Derbyshire, into which Sheffield Circuit extended, made considerable advancement during this year; and Chesterfield and other places in the vicinity were made into a separate circuit.

Barnsley circuit also made rapid progress, and greatly enlarged its borders.

The late Mr. Thomas Holliday, then a young man of considerable physical and mental vigour, and full of ardent zeal, had just entered upon his ministerial career in that circuit, and was sent to carry on missionary operations at Halifax and the district around in the spring of 1821. About the middle of April he began to preach at Elland, and other places in the vicinity of Halifax, and encouraged with the prospect of success, he went to Barnsley adjourned quarterly meeting on the 28th of that month to give information of the extent of the mission, and to request that another preacher might be sent to assist him. His request appears to have been complied with, Mr. Revel being sent to labour with him. The work of God prospered in their hands, and many sinners were turned to the Lord. Persecution and imprisonment, however, awaited them, which they were speedily called to endure. On the 27th of May, they had intended to preach in the open-air in some villages near Halifax, but the weather being extremely wet, frustrated their design. But being at Halifax in the evening, and the weather probably more favourable, they resolved to hold a religious service in the Butter Market. They therefore sang down Back Lane to the place, and Mr. Holliday stood up to preach. While engaged in prayer, a man shook him by the arm and wished

him to give over. Mr. Holliday, however, continued to pray till he could properly conclude, when he opened his eyes and found that it was a constable that had interrupted him. Mr. H.'s name being demanded, he readily gave it, together with information respecting the errand of mercy on which he was come; but to the request to come down, and go away without preaching, he refused to comply, asserting that he had a divine commission to go out into the streets and the highways to call sinners to repentance, and that he should preach in that place unless forcibly prevented. The constable after some more conversation produced a paper, saying that he had a warrant for Mr. H., and then pulled him down, and taking hold also of Mr. Revel, conducted them both to his house, and there placed them in custody. He shortly afterwards, however, left them alone; and Mr. Holliday, seeing a crowd of persons in front, who had been attracted to the spot through him and Mr. R. being in custody there, he preached to them from the window place, a sermon on the New Birth. The crowd listened with attention, and the power of God attended the word; and when the sermon was over, many would not go away. "The people seemed much troubled about us," says Mr. H., "but we told them we were happy in the love of God." The patience of the missionaries, however, was soon put to the test by the rude and savage behaviour of a person who went into the room in which they stood, "cursing and swearing," and threatening to knock Mr. Holliday down if he would not come down. He next thrust the handle of his umbrella into Mr. H.'s mouth, and then dragged him and Mr. R. into a lumber room, which they called their "inner prison."

On the following day, Monday, May 28th, 1821, Justice Horton came to the office, and the missionaries were arraigned before him. He inquired if they would find bail for their appearance at Bradford sessions, and if they would be bound to preach no more in the streets of Halifax till after those sessions. The missionaries declined to do either, and said they had authority from the word of God to preach the gospel in the streets and in the highways and

hedges. The magistrate then committed both of them to Wakefield House of correction, till the sessions at Bradford. They praised God that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake; but the magistrate said he would have none of their *blasphemy* there! Mr. Holliday, however, assured him that they should praise God, let him do what he liked with them, for they were not only ready to suffer bonds and imprisonment for their Master's sake, but also to die for Him if need be. The following day, the preachers were sent to Wakefield House of correction; to which they went joyfully, and sang the praises of God as they were taken through the streets of Halifax and through the villages on the way to Wakefield.

Their friends, however, deemed it prudent to find bail for them, and they were accordingly liberated on the Saturday evening following, and they took an active part in the powerful camp-meeting held the next day on Mexbro' Common, already noticed, where their appearance and addresses added to the great excitement of the occasion.

The imprisonment of men simply for preaching the gospel in the streets would, doubtless, produce a great excitement among the spirited inhabitants of the West Riding, and would create no small measure of indignation towards the parties who had committed what would be deemed an act of tyranny and wickedness, and would arouse much sympathy with the sufferers. Greater publicity would thereby be given to the labours of the missionaries; greater numbers would flock to hear them, and more liberal aid would be rendered towards meeting their expenses. Such, indeed, was the rapid progress of the cause in this populous district, and such the contributions of the people, that the Halifax mission cost Barnsley circuit but a mere trifle, and before the conference of 1822, both Halifax and Wakefield branches were made into separate circuits.

At the sessions at Bradford, Messrs. Holliday and Revel were acquitted, and the former immediately preached in the streets of Bradford, intending, if practicable, to make it the next centre of his missionary operations. But, ere Mr. Holliday and his circuit

could make arrangements for taking it up as a regular mission station, Leeds circuit appears to have begun to labour there. The following account of the progress of the cause in this town and neighbourhood has been furnished by Mr. John Coulson.

"When I was stationed at Leeds, we opened Bradford, Drewsbury, Otley, and other places. We preached out of doors at Bradford for some time, but seemed to make little head-way. We next preached in the house of a wool-comber, but still made little advancement. One night I went to the house, but found no congregation. I resolved to preach in the street by lamp-light. The wool-combers' lamp was therefore hung up in the street, and I took my stand under it. The people began to gather together, and I soon had a good congregation.

"I afterwards received a letter from a young man of another community, who informed me that many persons had been brought to God under our labours, but that his own denomination had reaped the fruits, as we had no suitable place of worship. Inquiry was therefore made for a room, and a magistrate agreed to let us have one in the street, which on account of the wickedness of its inhabitants, was called 'Devil-street.' The room was soon opened for religious worship; it became thronged with hearers, mostly poor weavers, and we were very successful among them."

Such was the striking and blessed changed produced among the people, that it is said, the name of the street in which the preaching room was situated was changed from "Devil-street," to that of "Reform-street." No reformation of morals can equal that which is produced by the glorious gospel of the blessed God, preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and received with meekness and in faith.

Straitened for room, the new converts soon began to pray for the Lord to open the way for the erection of a new chapel. Though they were in humble circumstances, they were full of hope that they should succeed. They formed themselves into companies, and went through town and country soliciting subscriptions. They next bought land, and then laid the foundation-stone of

their intended chapel. They had expected a very large collection on the occasion, but the weather being rainy, made against them, and they obtained only three pounds. They, however, continued to pray for help, and proceeded with the erection as well as they were able; and a gentleman sympathizing with them in the enterprize, lent them a sufficient sum of money to complete the building, and in due time it was opened for the worship of God.

At Dudley Hill, two miles from Bradford, the preachers conducted service in a stable. At Great Horton, Mr. Coulson preached the first sermon out of doors in the rain, after preaching at Dudley Hill at six o'clock. A large congregation was soon collected, a good society formed, and ere long a substantial chapel built. At Shelf, between Bradford and Halifax, the missionaries laboured with success. Mr. Moses Bottomley gave them a hearty welcome to his dwelling, and in a short time a chapel was erected there, even before that at Bradford, or the one at Great Horton. The chapel at Shelf was blown down once or twice during the course of its erection, which was a source of great grief to the friends; but they persevered in their efforts, the chapel was at length completed, and a good society established.

The conference of this year (1822) was held at Loughborough, in Leicestershire. The connexion was reported to be in a prosperous state. The number of members had become 25,218, being an increase for the year of 8,824. The travelling preachers were reported to be 152, a large addition, doubtless, to the number of the former year. The religious services in connection with the conference were very powerful. A camp-meeting was held at Barrow-upon-Soar, at which many souls were converted to God. Another powerful open-air service was held at Sheepshead; and two of the delegates preached at Nottingham, on ground which had been purchased for the erection of a spacious chapel, an event of considerable interest at that period of the connexion.

The rapid increase of the community, and the formation of many new circuits, whose office-bearers had but little experience in church government, called for the enactment of sundry new



regulations, which therefore were made and inserted in the printed Minutes of this conference. The most important of these new regulations was the appointment of a general committee at Hull, which, as well as the book committee at Tunstall, was to "pay attention to general concerns till the next annual meeting." The duties of the general committee were not very exactly defined; but its chief duty was to "give advice to circuits in cases of difficulty or exigency," and if need be to send a deputation to examine matters urgently calling for attention in any station. A general committee has ever since been annually appointed, and the arrangement has greatly contributed to promote the harmony and stability of the community. The duties of this committee are now fully defined, and the business it has to transact is very weighty and important.

CHAPTER XIII.

Progress of the Connexion from the Conference of 1822 to that of 1823.—Tunstall Circuit.—Progress of Manchester Circuit.—Successful Mission to the Isle of Man.—Norfolk Mission.—Hull Circuit's Northern Mission.—Opening of Weardale.—Great success of the Missionaries.—Mission to Kendal.—Mission to Carlisle.—Ulverstone Mission.—Missionaries sent to London.—Conference of 1823.

TUNSTALL circuit made considerable advancement during this connexional year. The work of God prospered greatly at Congleton, and the society became numerous and powerful. The zealous and well-regulated efforts of tract distributors were rendered of signal benefit to many persons, and tended to enlarge the congregation and augment the society. A lovefeast of extraordinary power was conducted there by Mr. Hugh Bourne, in September, 1822. Prayer was offered with penitents for several hours, and a considerable number found peace with God through faith in Christ.

Other parts of the circuit appear to have been favoured with similar prosperity, but we shall confine our observations at present to Ramsor, Burland, and Oaken Gates branches, which were made into separate circuits between the conference of 1822 and that of 1823. Ramsor branch first claims our attention. Mr. Hugh Bourne naturally looked with paternal affection to Ramsor and the vicinity, as being some of the scenes of his first missionary efforts. In the magazine for August, 1823, he says, "Ramsor and Wootton are two of the first places where the Primitive Methodist connexion took root, and where it was greatly fostered and nursed in its infancy; and those places set open a door for a most



extensive spread of the work. Ramsor continued a part of Tunstall circuit till the year 1822; when, at the June quarter-day, it was made into a separate circuit, having two preachers stationed in it."

The branch had prospered during the preceding quarter, and was now made into a separate circuit with encouraging prospects of success, which were happily realized to a considerable extent during the year, numerous conversions having taken place.

Burland branch comes next in order. We meet with some extracts from the journal of Mr. John Ride, which shew that this branch was prospering in the early part of this year. In March, 1822, he preached at Wrexham, in North Wales, to which town the branch appears to have extended. He discoursed in the open-air in the afternoon, and at six in a house. As many souls were seeking the Lord the latter service continued till ten o'clock. The next day he visited the people from house to house, and had the happiness of seeing one person converted. Three days after he preached with good effect at Lavister, when five persons were "born again," and seven united with the society.

In April he preached at Chester, where one person was made happy in the Lord, and many others were in distress about their souls. Two days afterwards he came to Burland, where he and Mr. Appleby visited and prayed with the people from house to house, and religious impressions were thereby made upon the minds of many.

He was also cheered with the conversion of an aged woman at Huxley, a cripple, who afterwards opened her house for a prayer-meeting, which was productive of much good.

In this branch a number of substantial families identified themselves with the cause, and have continued to render it regular and liberal aid. Many zealous local preachers were soon raised up, among whom, two became well known, not only in their own localities, but also in the connexion generally, having shared largely in the transaction of its most important business, and rendered it eminent service by their talents and virtues. Mr. George Taylor

was a man of sound judgment, of unimpeachable morals, of unbending integrity, of deep piety, of great influence among his neighbours and acquaintance, and of ardent attachment to the connexion, of which he was a pillar and an ornament. He and other members of his family ever rendered liberal aid to the rising community, and greatly rejoiced in its prosperity. Mr. Taylor became one of the first permanent members of conference, and after promoting its interest to the uttermost of his power for a number of years, died happy in the Lord, amidst the deep regrets of an unusually large circle of admiring friends.

Mr. Thomas Bateman was considerably his junior in years, but greatly his superior in ability as a public speaker, whether in the pulpit or on the platform. His eloquence soon gained him great popularity as a preacher in the vicinity of his residence, and speedily won for him the admiration of his own and of other communities through an extensive district, in which his pulpit and platform efforts were in constant requisition. Mr. Taylor's business talents and Mr. Bateman's eloquence as a public speaker greatly promoted the stability and influence of the Burland branch, which had doubtless become well capable of governing itself, when in this connexional year it was made into a separate circuit.

The prosperity of Oaken Gates branch was not inferior to that of Burland. In our last chapter we inserted Mr. Hugh Bourne's account of a powerful camp-meeting held in the neighbourhood of Oaken Gates, in May 1822. And from the journal of S. Spittle, published in the connexional magazine, it appears that the good work continued to prosper, and that the missionaries extended their labours to Shrewsbury, the county town of Shropshire. It is probable that the preachers stationed at Oaken Gates and the neighbourhood first visited that ancient provincial town in the month of June, 1822. Miss Spittle arrived there on Saturday, June 29th, of this year, immediately after the society had been formed. She says: "Sunday, 30th, I preached three times to very large congregations, and believe good was done. After preaching I led a class, and joined nine more members. There

are forty-four in society, and there is likely to be a good work." This expectation was happily fulfilled. In about a month afterwards the members of society had become sixty in number. Mr. Bonser visited the town in the beginning of August, and was cheered with the prospect of much good, though he met with unmerited opposition, and was apprehended by a constable by order of the mayor, under circumstances which aggravated the oppression. Writing from Oaken Gates to Tunstall circuit authorities, under date of August 9th, 1822, Mr. Bonser says: "Dear brethren in Christ, I was at Shrewsbury on Sunday last, and found the work of God prospering. We have received sixty members in this short time. Last Sunday, however, I met with some opposition. In the morning I preached at Meole, (a small village in the neighbourhood). At two in the afternoon I came into the town; and hearing that hundreds were met together to be hired for the harvest work, I resolved to go and try to engage some of them for my Master. There was a large congregation, and the people were very attentive; but when I had nearly done preaching the Mayor sent a constable to fetch me to the Town-hall. There I was told that if I would find bail never to preach there any more I should be set free. Refusing to do this, the Mayor committed me to prison till the sessions. I went singing through the streets to the prison, hundreds following me. Many wept much, and when I bade them farewell, the town seemed all in confusion. I was in prison from about half-past four o'clock till half-past twelve next day. Prayer was made for me at the different chapels, and when brought before another magistrate on Monday, he set me at liberty. I preached on the Monday night. I had not quite all the people in Shrewsbury to hear me, but I had many of them. The occurrence has done us a deal of good in this town." The Mayor and his coadjutors were high churchmen, and professed to have much zeal for religion. Albeit, they had far more regard for unblushing Sabbath-breakers than for zealous and devoted ministers of the gospel.

A large portion of the inhabitants of the town, however, evinced

a different spirit, and the humble missionaries of the Primitive Methodist body pursued their self-denying labours among them with their wonted success. Many vile sinners were reclaimed from their vicious practices through their instrumentality, and gave evidence of having become new creatures in Christ. The society flourished encouragingly, and soon became the head of a branch of Oaken Gates circuit.

A few months after his apprehension and brief imprisonment at Shrewsbury, Mr. Bonser met with similar treatment at Bridgenorth, another ancient town in Shropshire. On Sunday afternoon, November 3rd, 1822, he stood up in the Market-place, intending to preach, and a great number of people gathered around him. But he had not proceeded far in the service when he was apprehended and brought before one of the bailiffs of the town, who told him that he would have no preaching in the streets, and that if Mr. Bonser preached therein he should be sent to prison. Mr. Bonser replied he had a commission from the Divine Author of Christianity to go into the highways and hedges to compel sinners to come to the gospel feast, and intended to carry out his commission. He was then dismissed, but with a charge to preach no more there. Many people, however, were still waiting to hear him, and he therefore returned to the place whence he had been taken, and recommenced the service. He had sung a hymn, prayed, sung again, given a short exhortation to his hearers to be calm, and to keep their minds stayed upon God, and taken a text and begun to preach, when the constable apprehended him a second time, and then brought him before both bailiffs of the town. They now ordered him to be thrust into the dungeon, and he was accordingly conducted thither; but he was apparently in a joyous mood, for he sang the praises of God on the way. This took place between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. About nine, one of the bailiffs sent a servant to offer Mr. Bonser liberty, on condition of a promise that neither he nor any of his brethren should preach in the streets any more. Mr. Bonser sent a characteristic reply—that he would sooner die in prison than

make such a promise. The night was very cold, and he had nothing but a few boards and a little straw to lie upon. He therefore walked about to keep himself warm, and sang the praises of God from a grateful heart. At twelve o'clock a messenger was sent to tell him that he was not allowed to make such a noise, the neighbours could not sleep. He replied that Paul and Silas sang praises to God at midnight, and that he should do the same, for though his body was confined his tongue was at liberty. About an hour afterwards, however, a friend brought him a pair of blankets, and he then lay down and composed himself to sleep. About eleven o'clock next day he was taken to the Town-hall, and was charged with having preached in the street. He was told that he should be fined if he would not promise to preach there no more. He answered that he should not have remained in the miserable dungeon all night if he had intended to make such a promise, and that sooner than pay a fine he would stand the bailiffs a trial. Perplexed in the affair, and evidently not knowing what best to do, the bailiffs sent him out of the room while they consulted on the case. In about an hour he was called in again, and three proposals were made to him, namely, to promise that neither he or any of his brethren should preach in the streets any more, or to find bail for his appearance at the sessions, or to be sent to prison at Shrewsbury. He immediately made his choice, saying, "Then I will go to Shrewsbury, for I was there a few months ago, and they used me extremely well. They brought me eight breakfasts to prison one morning, and promised that they would use me well if I came again." The bailiffs of Bridgenorth, however, were unwilling to have recourse to such rigorous measures, and perhaps upon reflection doubted the legality of Mr. Bonser's apprehension. He was therefore sent out of the room a second time, while they held further consultation. About three o'clock he was called in again, and told that he might have his liberty, but if found preaching in the streets again he should again be apprehended. He remonstrated with the bailiffs on the treatment he had received, having been apprehended

for the breach of no law, and thrust into a dungeon hardly fit for a dog. They at length confessed that they believed his motives were pure, shook hands with him in a friendly manner, and promised to protect him against the severe persecutions he frequently endured while conducting religious worship in a private house. It is to the credit of these gentlemen that they kept their word. Three of the worst persecutors of Mr. Bonser and his brethren were soon after brought before them, when they proved their willingness to afford the protection which the laws of the land provided for persons engaged in religious worship.

The missionary efforts of the preachers in Oaken Gates branch appear at this time to have extended considerably into the south of Shropshire, reaching to Madeley, Ironbridge, Broseley, Wenlock, and probably farther; and at all these places they met with more or less success. At Tunstall circuit's quarterly meeting, in December, 1822, the branch was made into a separate circuit. "This new circuit," says Mr. Bourne, in the magazine for February, 1823, "is chiefly in Shropshire, but it extends into Staffordshire and to the edge of Wales. Six travelling preachers are stationed in it, and it is formed into two branches, the Oaken Gates branch and the Shrewsbury branch. The work of religion in these parts has advanced very rapidly, and is still going on well." We shall have occasion to notice again the missionary efforts of this circuit and of Shrewsbury branch.

We must now briefly chronicle the progress of Manchester circuit. On the 19th of May, 1822, a powerful camp-meeting was held near Oldham, which is thus described by one present: "We had only one preaching stand in the morning; but in the afternoon we were under the necessity of having two, fourteen thousand persons, it was supposed being present. In the course of the day a number of sermons were preached, a variety of exhortations were delivered, and several anecdotes related, all of which were attended with extraordinary effect. Solemnity seemed to rest upon the people, and hundreds were frequently bathed in tears. We had five praying companies, besides two others in

which continual prayer was made for penitents for about three hours. About forty souls were brought to God, and I may safely say that hundreds were made sensible of their lost state. People of all denominations viewed this meeting with approval; the attention of thousands was directed to divine things, and the hearts of many were inspired with more zeal for the Lord of Hosts."

The societies at Oldham and in the neighbourhood were soon afterwards deemed capable of self-government, and were therefore made into a separate circuit. According to the first minute book of Manchester circuit, Oldham and the vicinity were made into a separate circuit, September 16th, 1822, containing the following places, Oldham, Chadderton, Royton, Cow-hill, Sholver, Mumps, Lees, Shaw, and Shore Edge, and at the whole of which there were 265 members in society. At the following conference this circuit reported 483 members,—a very large increase for about six months.

Bolton, with one travelling preacher and 233 members, was made into a separate circuit three months earlier, namely, at Manchester June quarterly meeting of 1822. It is remarkable that no other place appears to have been given up with it from Manchester circuit. It is probable, therefore, that new places would at once be visited, and as we find two preachers stationed to the circuit at the following conference, and the number of members to have risen to 500, it seems that some had been visited with considerable success. During the year, too, this young circuit sent Mr. John Butcher as a missionary to the Isle of Man. This must have been done in about six months after Bolton was made into a separate circuit, for Mr. Butcher was preaching in the island early in January, 1823, as the following extracts will shew. "Friday, January 10th, preached at Castletown, when two souls found liberty, and three persons united with the society. Sunday 12th, I was at Colby. A large company was present. Two persons obtained liberty, and three joined with the society. Thursday, 16th, I was at Howe, and formed a society of seven members."

The success of Mr. Butcher's labours in the island was very great. Deep religious impressions were made upon the minds of multitudes, and not a few were savingly brought to God. In March, 1823, a few months after Mr. B. landed on the island, 110 members had been gathered into society, and Castletown and the adjacent places were formed into a separate circuit. In ordinary circumstances it would have been very imprudent and hasty to form such infant societies, having little or no religious experience, into an independent station, to be self-sustained and self-governed; but peculiar circumstances might justify the measure, and perhaps render it requisite. At all events, the societies continued to prosper, and the work of God to spread. A second preacher was speedily employed, and the borders of the circuit were enlarged. Under date of May 5th, 1823, several persons write from Kirk Arbory to Bolton circuit authorities, "Dear fathers and brethren in the gospel,—We have the pleasure of informing you that the preachers you have sent over to us have by their preaching and the blessing of Almighty God been rendered instrumental in the salvation of many souls. We have now in society about 200 members, and the work appears as if it were but just beginning. The people flock to hear them as doves to their windows, many from the distance of four or five miles, and cry, 'come and preach for us.' But as we have only two preachers, they can only compass about twelve or fourteen miles in length, on one side of the island, and as we have no local preachers yet we cannot reach the places as we could wish. We have some members who are nearly ready to become exhorters, and we have begun to hold prayer-meetings, which are a blessing to us. We have begun to preach at Douglas; one of our preachers has preached in the Market-place the last five Sabbaths to amazingly large congregations."

The work appears to have prospered at Douglas, as it did at Castletown and the neighbouring places; and there was a great in-gathering of precious souls. In June, 1823, the societies formed in the island contained 360 members.

Turning to Nottingham district, we find but little to record during this year. The mission in Norfolk experienced some reverses through the unfaithfulness of W. Wildbur, one of the missionaries, a man of feeble powers and of superficial piety. The mission had prospered greatly, and several branches had been formed which promised to become fruitful fields of labour; but Mr. Wildbur became dissatisfied with the authorities of Nottingham circuit, and by misrepresentation sought to enlist the travelling preachers in the Norfolk branches in his efforts at insubordination and misrule. In October, 1822, he declared himself independent of Nottingham circuit, and apparently expected a large party to unite with him in his divisive measures. But Messrs. Charlton and Whitby were sent from Nottingham into Norfolk, to investigate the affairs, and by the blessing of God upon their efforts they were successful in preserving most of the societies, and in making satisfactory arrangements for their establishment and future prosperity. Mr. Wildbur, however, secured for himself the preaching room at Lynn, and prevailed upon above seventy members to secede with him, and attempted to scatter the rest. For being the head of a separate society he was utterly incompetent, and his cause shortly came to nothing, and many of those whom he had induced to unite with him became immoral and profane. But the societies which remained in connexion with the Primitive Methodists speedily recovered the shock which Mr. Wildbur's improper proceedings had produced, and the missions appear to have been greatly extended. At the conference of 1822, we find only eleven travelling preachers for Nottingham circuit, but at the ensuing conference the number had increased to twenty, and it is probable that most of these additional preachers were employed in Norfolk. The members in Nottingham circuit, including those in the Norfolk and other branches, amounted to 3,636 at the conference of 1823.

Loughborough circuit appears to have experienced a considerable share of prosperity during this year. Ashby-de-la-Zouch was made into a separate circuit, with about 300 members, and there

yet remained in Loughborough circuit 1,448 at the conference of 1823.

Belper circuit became powerful, and at the conference of 1823 reported 1,172 members. Derby and Retford circuits appear to have made little or no progress; and some time afterwards ceased to be independent stations, becoming incorporated with neighbouring circuits, in which they remained for many years, but have again for some time been independent circuits, and the former a powerful and prosperous one.

Coming now to Hull district we find, as heretofore, especially in Hull circuit, records of prosperity and enlargement.

We begin with the mission to Northumberland, briefly noticed in the foregoing chapter. It is therein stated that Mr. Clowes preached his first sermon at Newcastle in the autumn of 1821, during a visit to his friends and countrymen, Messrs. Morris and Bagshaw. Previous to his second visit to this town Mr. John Branfoot was sent as a missionary to it from Hutton Rudby circuit. Mr. John Lightfoot, who has for many years been a highly esteemed and useful minister in the denomination, entertained Mr. Branfoot on his first arrival at Newcastle, and has furnished the following brief account of his labours. "In the evening of the same day on which Mr. Branfoot was introduced to me, he attempted to commence his missionary labours by preaching in a place near that where Mr. Wesley preached his first sermon at Newcastle about eighty years before, at the end of Sandgate. But Mr. Branfoot's attempt to preach that evening was almost frustrated by the noise and disturbance of a mob. There had been a boat-race on the river during the day, which had caused such dissipation in the neighbourhood that he could not hold a regular service. It was in the midst of much noisy interruption that he spoke for a short time. The next evening he preached with more apparent success in High-street, Gateshead. The day following he visited some friends at Pallion, near Sunderland, and preached there, and returned to Newcastle the day after. The next morning he informed me that Mr. James Farrar might be expected



to visit us, and leaving a parcel of hymn books in my charge, he returned to his circuit. A considerable time elapsed, yet Mr. Farrar did not make his appearance, and I wondered that the parcel of books should so long remain unclaimed. But one Saturday morning, while standing behind my counter, a very solemn grave looking person, with an open countenance and large eyes, attired much like a Quaker, came into our shop, and after respectfully saluting my master, inquired of me if my name was Lightfoot. I replied 'It is; is your name Farrar?' He answered, 'No, my name is Clowes.' He then informed me that Hutton Rudby circuit had transferred the Newcastle Mission to Hull circuit, and that he as the leading missionary had called to enquire after a parcel of books left in my care."

The populous towns of Newcastle-on-Tyne, North and South Shields, and Sunderland, and the adjacent places, now comprised "The Northern Mission" of Hull circuit, which was supported with becoming energy and zeal, and a large harvest of precious souls was soon reaped by the enterprising and zealous missionaries. Messrs. John and Thomas Nelson were early sent to this important field of labour, and, as well as Mr. Clowes, were rendered abundantly useful in the conversion of sinners. Reference is made to their labours in the following extracts from the journals of Mr. Clowes. "The annual meeting (or conference) of this year (1822) was held at Loughborough. After attending it I returned to the Newcastle-upon-Tyne mission. On Sunday, June 23rd, I preached on the New Quay, at North Shields, to a great many people who heard with attention, and I trust good was done. In the evening I crossed over to the south side of the Tyne, and heard brother John Nelson preach to a crowded congregation in the chapel, while many were outside. I gave an exhortation afterwards, and several souls were set at liberty in a prayer-meeting, held in a friend's house after the service in the chapel. Wednesday, 26th, I went with brother J. Nelson to Blyth, a small town by the sea side. I preached in the open-air, and we were well received by the people. The next day we went



to Newbiggen, where the inhabitants are mostly fishermen. They had no preaching except once a month by the Church of England. We stood in the open air, and gave them a word of exhortation. A few gathered around us, but others stood at a distance as if they were frightened.

"Sunday, June 30th, I preached in the morning at North Shields, in the open air, near New Melbourne Place, and the Lord was graciously present. I preached again in the afternoon upon the New Quay to a large congregation. The next day I preached in the open air upon Ballast Hills, Newcastle. On Thursday, July 4th, I went further north, to Morpeth, where I met with brother Nelson. He had sent the cryer about to announce our preaching near the Town Cross. A great number of people attended. Several of them did not behave well, but most of them were serious.

"Sunday, July 14th, I preached at North Shields, at ten and two, and at South Shields at six. I met the class on the north side, and joined several more to the society. Tuesday 16th, I preached at Sunderland, and had a quickening time. There is likely to be a good work here. Next day I preached at North Shields, and held a powerful prayer-meeting, at which two souls professed to find liberty.

"Sunday, July 28th, I preached in the morning at North Shields. At one o'clock I led a lovefeast in the chapel at the lower end of the town. It was a gracious time indeed; cries for mercy and shouts of glory were heard all over the chapel, and many were set at liberty. There is a good work in both North and South Shields. I did but open this place on the 3rd of February this year, and now we have about 150 members of society, including those in South Shields. Monday, 29th, I heard brother Thomas Nelson preach in the open air at Ballast Hills, Newcastle. I gave an exhortation after, and told the people that we should form a society that night, and if any were determined to leave their sins and turn to God, they might unite with us. The people



were greatly affected—some of them cried for mercy, and we formed a society of ten persons.

"Sunday, August 4th, I preached at Percy Main, where there is about 18 in society. Next day I preached at Ballast Hills, met the class, and joined four more to it.

"Sunday, August 11th, I preached at Newcastle. Next day I preached there again, when there was a cry for mercy. I met the class, and joined 3 more to the society, now numbering 17. Some of the worst of characters are turning to God.

"Sunday, August 18th, I preached in the morning in the open air at Percy Main, to the pitmen there. At two o'clock I renewed the society tickets to the preacher's class at North Shields. At six I preached in the open air at the lower end of the town, and held a prayer-meeting afterwards in the chapel. There are about 20 in society in this part of the town, and 50 in the other part—70 in all. In South Shields, on the other side of the river, there are 112 members in society.

"Sunday, September 1st, I preached in the open air to many people at Sunderland. In the afternoon I met the class, and found there were 6 members in the society."

The good work thus auspiciously begun in this populous district continued to prosper, and multitudes of sinners were turned to the Lord. A large school-room was obtained for worship at Sunderland, in which Mr. Clowes preached, apparently for the first time, on Tuesday, October 8th, 1822, when great good was effected. In this large room, a kind of sail loft, the labours of Messrs. John and Thomas Nelson were rendered abundantly successful; many vile sinners were converted from the error of their ways, and large accessions were made to the society.

At South Shields also a large room, nearly 30 yards long, was taken by the society, which Mr. Clowes opened for divine worship on Sunday, October 20th, 1822. It was crowded to excess; the congregation was deeply moved; and, despite of some disturbance created by the curiosity of certain persons, two souls found peace through believing. Temple Town, Jarrow, Pallion, Hylton, Monk



Wearmouth, and many other places south of the Tyne, were likewise visited with great effect; and Percy Main, Howden Pans, William Pit, Benton Square, and many other places north of the Tyne, besides Newcastle and North Shields, were visited by the missionaries, and favoured with showers of blessings. The societies newly formed in this mission were early taught the duty of liberally supporting the cause which they had espoused, and almost from the first became self-sustained. The societies north of the Tyne, including Newcastle and North Shields, were made into a separate circuit, containing 335 members, before the conference of 1823, and had three travelling preachers stationed to it by that conference.

A blessed work of grace was carried on among the pitmen, and a striking reformation was apparent in their conduct. The effects produced by the labours of the missionaries in this district are thus described by Mr. W. Lister, an influential minister, himself the fruit of their preaching. "When the Primitive Methodist missionaries first visited Newcastle, North Shields, and the places in the immediate neighbourhood, the cause of true religion was in a languid state among Christians generally, and wickedness was rampant among multitudes of the inhabitants, especially among the pit-men and keel-men near the banks of the Tyne. These two classes of men were then proverbial for drunkenness and its attendant vices. Large numbers of them used frequently to assemble on Newcastle Town Moor, and at other places, to engage in bowling matches, foot-races, cock-fighting, pugilistic contests, and other vicious practices. But the preaching of the earnest and zealous missionaries among them was attended with uncommon power, and resulted in the most blessed effects. Many of the strongholds of vice were shaken; an extensive revival of religion took place, and hundreds of the most profligate were converted to God. Scores of youths, too, who were beginning to run in the same vicious courses as many of their seniors, were happily rescued from their evil practices, and induced to consecrate the morning of their day of life to the service of their God and Saviour. Deep



emotions, loud responses, and sometimes faintings and convulsions attended the preaching, and other religious services among the pitmen. Not unfrequently persons were so powerfully wrought upon that they could not stand, but fell to the ground, or fainted on their seats. But the genuineness of the work was proved by its fruits. A general reformation of manners was witnessed. Sobriety, industry, and peaceable behaviour took the place of drunkenness, indolence, and brawls, and contentions. Masters of collieries could not but observe the change. One of them said, when applied to for aid towards the erection of a chapel, "O yes, I will help you, for your preachers have done so much good amongst our men, that we have much less to subscribe for policemen, and for trials for misconduct."

"Rooms were opened for preaching, societies formed, and Sabbath-schools instituted with amazing rapidity; and other Christian churches, too, reaped a large harvest from the successful labours of our missionaries. These zealous men were permitted to prosecute their pious and self-denying labours here without encountering those storms of persecution which frequently burst upon their brethren in the South and West of England. They could generally command a respectful hearing in the open-air, and were mostly treated with civility and kindness."

Whilst Hull circuit was conducting successful missionary operations in the northern portions of Durham and in Northumberland, it was also happily employed in similar labours in the North Western portion of Durham, and in the adjoining county of Westmorland. In the autumn of 1822 the late excellent and useful Thomas Batty was appointed to Barnard Castle branch of Hull circuit, and soon after his arrival there he and his colleagues visited Weardale and the neighbourhood, and their labours were crowned with uncommon success. Crowds of persons went to hear them; many were pricked in their hearts, and soon found peace through faith in Christ. The late J. D. Muschamp, Esq., was among the early converts. He speedily fitted up a barn for worship at Westgate, which was generally crowded to excess, so

that many persons went half an hour before the appointed time in order to obtain a seat. It was encouraging to the missionaries to find the place full of attentive hearers at the commencement of the service, many of whom had been for some time earnestly singing the praises of God, and in a prayerful and devout spirit were waiting to hear the preached word. And that word ran like fire among them, and multitudes were converted. "For a whole year," says Mr. Batty, "I never heard any one inquire, 'What sort of a meeting have you had?' The usual inquiry was, 'How many souls have you had to-night?' meaning how many have found peace through believing?" The society at Westgate greatly flourished, but at some other places in the dale, above Westgate, though the congregations were large and attentive, there were not for some time any visible conversions, and no societies were formed. This was distressing to the missionaries, and almost overwhelmed Mr. Batty with heart-rending grief. It was some consolation to him to be assured that multitudes were then labouring under deep conviction, and he soon after had the happiness of witnessing the conversion of numbers. Going to preach one night at Low Rigg, he found the congregation too large to be accommodated in the house. He therefore preached in the open-air; and before he had preached a quarter of an hour a person fell down under the word, groaned aloud and cried for mercy. He was carried into the house, and a mighty prayer-meeting commenced. A small society was formed that night, and the work of God advanced rapidly thenceforward. A hundred souls were added to the societies ere the expiration of the quarter. An additional preacher was obtained, and during the succeeding quarter three hundred persons were added to the rising cause, and two hundred and fifty more during the quarter following. Five travelling preachers were now employed in Weardale and the neighbouring places, and, animated with such success, they cheerfully prosecuted their exhausting labours.

"Those who remember the number of miles we travelled over high and rugged mountains," says Mr. Batty, "and through deep

valleys, frequently through swollen streams in the gloomy winter season, or over lonely fells, with weary limbs, aching bones, blistered feet, sore throats, and hoarse voices, caused by incessant labour and fatigue—generally preaching three times on the Sabbath, frequently four times, besides attending prayer-meetings, leading classes, and walking many miles, will be ready to admit that our toil was great, and our hardships, sorrows, and privations numerous. But our Heavenly Father gave us strength according to our day, and gladdened our hearts with the conversion of many souls. From the night we formed a little class at Low Rigg, the work rolled on with great rapidity, and filled the country. Such a work had never been known there in the memory of the living. It was chiefly among lead miners and colliers."

The moral reformation which took place among the people was great and striking. Intemperance and its kindred evils were well nigh abolished; a drunken man could scarcely be met with where drunkards had formerly swarmed in great numbers,—and industry and virtue generally prevailed. "We had many enemies of one kind at first," says Mr. Batty, "but now their mouths are stopped, and we have got enemies of another kind,—the publicans, because their custom is lessened, many drunkards having become sober. On the other hand, we are getting a few friends among the tailors, some persons who formerly went in rags being now able to get new clothes; and we have many friends among the women, whose husbands were drunkards, spending much of their time and money in public-houses, but who, having become sober, they have now the comfort of their company at home, and the pleasure of going with them to the house of God."

An occurrence which took place during the erection of a new chapel at Westgate, further illustrates the beneficial reformation which had been effected among the inhabitants, and the influence which it exerted upon candid minds in the higher classes. With a view to save expense, the miners employed their vacant hours in getting stones for the chapel out of the river, which contained many stones of the kind generally used in the neighbourhood for

building purposes. But information was laid against them before the authorities, it being affirmed that as the stones tended greatly to break the force of the torrent which flowed down from the mountains during heavy rains, the next flood would be likely to wash down the bridge. Orders, therefore, were issued forbidding the miners to get any more stones out of the brook, and the erection of the chapel was thereby interrupted. The case found its way to Durham, and was brought before a meeting of magistrates and other persons. There it was stated that "the 'Ranters' were taking stones out of the river at Westgate for the purpose of building a chapel, and that this would be likely to cause the bridge to be carried away, if a strong flood should come." An inquiry was started, "Who are the Ranters?" One person replied, "Well, gentlemen, you know what trouble you have had with the people in Weardale through their poaching practices;—you have fined them, and imprisoned them, and have used all the means in your power to amend them, and have failed; but the 'Ranters,' so called, have gone among them, and have preached the gospel to them, and a great reformation has taken place. They have been the means of doing more good among them than all the magistrates in the county of Durham could do; and now the people want to build a chapel, and are getting stones for the purpose." This testimony was decisive. Permission was immediately given for a sufficient number of stones to be collected. The building went on again, and in due time was opened for religious worship.

Shotley Bridge, now the head of a circuit, was in the year 1823 included in Westgate branch, and the work of God prospered there and in the neighbourhood in a very cheering manner. Colliery Dykes, a village about five miles north of Shotley Bridge, and about nine south of Newcastle, was first visited by Mr. Batty and his colleagues. A great work of grace was carried on among the colliers there, and numbers turned to the Lord. A powerful camp-meeting was held on the common near the place, and at a lovefeast held in a barn, at the close of the camp-meeting, about thirty souls were made happy in the love of God.



During the time that the good work was prospering so signally in Weardale, and other parts of the north western districts of the county of Durham, a prosperous mission was conducted by Hull circuit in the neighbouring county of Westmoreland. In May, 1822, Mr. F. N. Jersey was sent to Kendal, an ancient town in this county, and commenced his missionary labours there with evident tokens of divine approval.

On Sunday, May 26th, 1822, he preached at Kendal for the first time; in the afternoon in a barn, and in the evening in the open air, having a great stone for a pulpit. Three or four persons afterwards obtained liberty at a prayer meeting. During the week he preached several times more, and several conversions took place; on the following Sunday twice, to vast concourses of people, and with good effect. On several successive Sabbaths he preached to similar assemblies, and with similar effect; witnessing the conversion of many, and making corresponding additions to the society.

The neighbouring town of Sedburgh also shared in his zealous labours, and gave promise of abundant fruit. He preached likewise at Cockbeck, and in Garsdale, and at other places; and the mission field in the district seemed white unto harvest.

This mission, so promising at the commencement, did not, however, fulfill the expectations which were then formed respecting it. Through some cause or other, with which we are not acquainted, it languished, and became so expensive that it was for a time abandoned, perhaps unwisely. It was commenced again by Mr. R. Cordingley, when he travelled in Preston circuit, in the year 1829. It was afterwards annexed to Barnard Castle circuit, and has at length become self-sustained, and is now an independent station.

According to information furnished by Mr. John Coulson, confirmed by statements in the memoir of Mr. Boothman, published in the magazine for 1832, the good effected under the labours of the first missionaries to Kendal led to the establishment of a mission at Carlisle, in Cumberland. An aged woman, who lived

near Kendal, was converted under their ministry, and procured a small hymn-book, with which she was greatly delighted. She resolved to take it to Carlisle to show it to Mr. Boothman, her brother-in-law, and to tell him what the Lord had done for her soul. She performed the journey of forty-four miles on foot. Mr. Boothman was delighted with the book, and deeply interested with the accounts she gave him of the "Ranters." He desired Mr. Johnson, his son-in-law, a local preacher belonging to another community, to return with his aunt to Kendal, and ascertain the character of this new religious sect, and its ecclesiastical constitution. The son-in-law complied with the request, and returned to Carlisle with glowing accounts of the Primitive Methodists, and with a copy of their rules. Mr. Boothman and Mr. Johnson were so interested with the people and with the constitution of the connexion, that they resolved to unite therewith. Application was at once made for a missionary. Preaching was instantly begun in the open air, numbers flocked to hear, and a society was speedily formed. Mr. Clowes visited them in a few weeks afterwards, and established a mission in the city and the surrounding country. "Sunday, November 3rd, 1822," says Mr. Clowes, "I preached at Carlisle, a city in Cumberland, in a large room (a hat warehouse) belonging to Mr. Boothman. We have here about 55 in society, and there is likely to be a good work. On the 4th, I met the society, and we chose leaders for three classes, likewise a society-steward and a secretary.

"Sunday, November 10th, I preached at Little Corby at nine, and formed a society of four members. At two I preached at Brampton, but had not my full liberty. I preached again at six, when I trust good was done. Several were seeking the Lord, but did not then get liberty. On the following night I met the society, containing 25 members, and gave them some advice respecting church discipline. We also chose two leaders and a society-steward. Wednesday, 13th, I held a prayer-meeting, and gave an exhortation, and two souls got liberty. Next day I held a prayer-meeting at brother Lawson's, at which



a cry for mercy was heard. On the 15th I came to Carlisle. Sunday, 27th, in the morning I met the society, and gave them tickets of membership. In the afternoon I led a lovefeast, at which one person professed to obtain liberty. At night I preached. The slain of the Lord were many, and five or six found peace. Tuesday, 18th, I preached at New Town, a place connected with the city. The following evening I attended a prayer-meeting, where one person found liberty.

"Sunday, November 24th, I met the society at Brampton, and preached in the afternoon and evening. Some souls were in distress, but did not then obtain liberty. On the 26th, I preached again, and had full liberty, and there was a cry for mercy. On the 29th, I came to Carlisle, where, on the next day, I and brother Johnson visited the society from house to house, and prayed with the people.

"Sunday, December 1st. In the morning I met brother Boothman's class, and at two and six I preached. Many could not get in, and there were a few persecutors. This excitement was partially caused by an advertisement which appeared in a newspaper, stating that a collection would be made to support some fellows who had gone mad, like the Prince of Denmark. But the Lord was with us.

"Tuesday, December 3rd, I set out for Hull, 180 miles, to attend the quarterly-meeting. The ground is all broken up between Hull and Carlisle. Through the mercy of God I can preach my way from Newcastle to Hull, night after night, without intermission, on ground which I have broken up or missioned myself. During this quarter the ground has been broken up between Newcastle and Carlisle. Our circuit extends from Carlisle, in Cumberland, to Spurn Point, in Holderness, an extent of more than two hundred miles. What is the breadth of the circuit I cannot tell; it branches off various ways. From Carlisle the work seems to spread two ways; one towards Whitehaven, and the other towards Gretna Green, in Scotland."

At the beginning of December, 1822, there were 71 members in

Carlisle, 34 at Brampton, and 6 at Little Corby—111 in all. Mr. Clowes also visited Penrith, and preached there several times with apparent success, and also at Haltwhistle, each of which is now the head of a circuit.

In the autumn of this year the missionaries of Hull circuit visited Hexham, in Northumberland, and succeeded in establishing a society.

A native of this town had been employed in his secular calling in Weardale, and on visiting his parents, at Hexham, he gave exciting accounts of the introduction of Primitive Methodism into that dale, and of the zealous and successful labours of the missionaries. His statements, together with the hymns and tunes he sang, excited considerable interest among his friends and acquaintance, many of whom expressed a desire to hear the preachers of this new denomination. And a Mr. John Gibson attended their religious services in connection with the opening of the Butchers' Hall, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on October 20th, 1822, and invited the preachers to Hexham. As the preachers of Newcastle could not comply with his request, he applied to Shotley Bridge, in Barnard Castle Branch, and a preacher from that town visited Hexham on the 26th of the same month. A place was provided for preaching, and a society of five members was formed in the evening. The bell-man was sent through the town to announce that a Primitive Methodist missionary would preach in the Old Kiln, on the Battle Hill, the following day. The excitement this announcement produced was very great, and long before the time appointed for the service to commence, the Old Kiln was crowed. The services of the day were very powerful; the missionary preached with "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;" many stout-hearted sinners trembled, and five more persons united with the infant cause. The Old Kiln was speedily fitted up so as to make it more convenient for public worship; and despite of serious persecution, bricks and stones being often thrown by the ungodly, the good work continued to prosper, and many souls were turned to the Lord.

Other parts of Hull circuit were also making encouraging progress at this period. Silsden branch was made into a separate circuit at the December quarterly meeting of this year (1823), with five travelling preachers, and Preston branch with three, both branches having greatly prospered, and appearing likely to do well in future. Bridlington branch of Hull circuit also made advancement, and in March, 1823, a great revival of religion took place at Filey, a fishing place of great notoriety. It is pleasantly situated on the north eastern coast of England, about twelve miles from Bridlington, and seven or eight from Scarborough. It is now a place of considerable importance, and is distinguished by its splendid buildings and accommodations for visitors. At the period named it was "noted for vice and wickedness of almost every description." Drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, swearing cock-fighting, card-playing, and similar evils were very prevalent. "It had been frequently visited by our preachers," says Mr. W. Howcroft, "and had been as frequently given up without hope of success. But about the beginning of March, 1823, one soul was awakened under brother Peart. About a fortnight after, brother Oxtoby paid the place a visit, when a great many more were awakened, and stirred up to seek the Lord." Mr. Oxtoby shortly afterwards returned to spend a few days there to pray with penitents, and direct them to Christ. In this important work he greatly excelled, and numbers soon found peace with God. In the course of a few weeks, about forty souls professed to find the Lord in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon. The inhabitants generally were brought under divine impressions, and the Church and the Wesleyan chapel were filled with hearers, as well as a large barn occupied by the missionaries. The ale-bench was deserted by numbers who exchanged the drunkard's song for the songs of Zion, and a striking reformation took place in the morals of the people. A good society was established by the Primitive Methodists, which has long been distinguished by the liberal support it renders to the missionary cause.

While the work of God was prospering on the north eastern

coast of England, Hull circuit extended its missionary labours to the north western coast, sending Mr. Jersey to establish a mission at Ulverstone and in the neighbourhood, on the northern side of Morecambe Bay, a barren district, on which he endured many hardships, and met with serious persecution. The devout frame in which he entered upon his missionary labours there may be learned from the following extract: "March 29th, 1823, I set off from Kendal to Ulverstone, and travelled over the craggy mountains of Westmoreland. On the way I kneeled down, and praised God that I was going on such an errand of mercy. On arriving at my journey's end my body was fatigued, but my soul was looking up to the rest which remains for the people of God." His commencement at Ulverstone was not very encouraging. He says, "March 30th, in the morning I met a class, and had a good time. At two o'clock I spoke in the room to about thirty persons, and again at six to about the same number. This was very discouraging; but being a wet day I could not get out of doors to speak the word of life." On the 3rd of April he preached there again, having previously visited about 150 houses, and invited the inmates to the service, but only about forty attended.

On April 6th he went to Dalton, and preached at the Market Cross to about 200 persons. He then returned to Ulverstone, and preached at the Market Cross to about 800 persons, "who had gathered together," he says, "to hear what this babbler had to say. When I told them of their sins, they laughed at me." On the 7th, he went to Broughton, and attempted to preach at the Market Cross, but was prevented for a time by certain parties ringing the church bells in order to interrupt him. At this place he met with more serious opposition a fortnight afterwards. Two men shouted in his ears while he prayed, dragged him off the cross, tore his coat, cursed him, and threatened to kill him if he would not give over singing. He replied that he was willing to die for his Master's sake. He succeeded in preaching, notwithstanding this violent treatment, and returned happy in God. "While I mused on the road," he said, "the fire kindled in my heart, and



I had a little heaven in my soul. The next morning when I awoke I found my body was sore, and some places on my arms, where those wicked men had pinched me, were bruised. But what does my soul good is, that glory is at the end." The following fortnight he was surrounded by a rabble, and as he was leaving the town a lawyer swore he would send him to the house of correction; but no material injury was done to him.

But Dalton was the place where he suffered the most determined opposition and the most violent persecution. The first three times he preached there, he was favoured with attentive congregations at the Market Cross, and met with no interruption; but the fourth time he went, the head gentleman of the town took two constables to prevent his preaching. Mr. Jersey gave the gentleman his name, according to his request, but continued to sing, and then proceeded to pray. The gentleman then ordered one of the constables to seize him, but the constable had not courage to do so. The gentleman then took hold of Mr. Jersey's hand, and desired him to give over; but Mr. Jersey did not so much as open his eyes, but kept on praying. His opponents next went to the people who surrounded him, and told them that if they stood to hear it would be worse for them, and then went away. After their departure, Mr. Jersey preached in peace. Ten days afterwards he was more seriously annoyed, and apparently prevented from preaching. He says, "April 30th, I went to Dalton to preach the word of life. When I was going to speak, a friend told me that a gentleman in the town had hired three men to blow some horns, to hinder the people from hearing, and me from speaking. I got upon the Market Cross, and committed the cause in which I was engaged into the hands of my blessed Master. I began to sing, while three horns and a watchman's large rattle were making a din in my ears. I kneeled down and prayed as loud as I could. The men then put the horns to my ears, till they made me quite dizzy. I got off my knees, and shouted 'Glory to Jesus! I can praise Thee amidst all the din of hell!' I told the people that 'my soul was happy in the midst of it all.'" On the

7th of May, Mr. Jersey went to Dalton again, and before he had done praying, men with horns approached him, and made such a noise that he could not preach. A battle then ensued among some who were wishful to hear him and those who sought to hinder them. On Sunday, the 11th, he went again, and endeavoured to preach, but was interrupted by wicked men who sat all round the cross, called upon the publicans for ale, and drank, and swore, and shouted, "The Church and King for ever." This manner of spending the Sabbath was not new to these blind and bigoted Churchmen. A market was held in the town every Sabbath during harvest, when they were accustomed to drink and fight! But what shall be said for the authorities, or the influential men of the town? Instead of endeavouring to put down these shameful practices, and punishing the disturbers of the peace, they encouraged them, and opposed the zealous preaching of the gospel. On the 14th of May, Mr. Jersey was served with a warrant for conducting riotous and tumultuous worship at the Market Cross at Dalton. After being in charge of a constable till the next day, he was brought before two magistrates, Messrs. Bradwell and Gales, who committed him to Lancaster Castle for four months for preaching in the open air, and also two of his hearers for standing to hear him. Mr. Jersey was afterwards liberated on bail; but the result of this cruel and illegal treatment, and of his missionary efforts at Ulverstone and the neighbourhood, we are unable to relate.

We must now record the commencement of a mission in London. Leeds circuit having a little money in hand, resolved to expend it in missionary operations; and probably little aware of the difficulties attendant on the establishment of new religious societies in the metropolis, and perhaps imagining a mission there would soon become self-sustaining, as most of the missions in the north and in the midland counties had hitherto done, resolved to send two missionaries thither. Messrs. P. Sugden and W. Watson were selected for this onerous undertaking; but so small was the amount of money with which they were furnished, that on



arriving in the metropolis they had only one shilling in their pockets. The coachman bowed, and solicited a gratuity. They gave him their only shilling. Next came the guard, and begged for a similar favour. They frankly told him who they were, and what were the circumstances in which they were placed. He happened to be a professor of religion, a member of the Baptist denomination; he sympathised with them in their difficulties, and with true Christian catholicity took them to his house, gave them a breakfast, and purchased some books of them in order to relieve them. This was in December, 1822. Being in winter, they could not well preach in the open air; and did not at first succeed in obtaining rooms in which to preach. They found some Bible Christians who were greatly in want of preachers, and they engaged to preach for them till they found an opening for their missionary labours,—P. Sugden to go into Kent, and W. Watson to labour in London. The latter shortly met with a person who had been a member of the Primitive Methodist society in the country; he and a few other friends soon united in a society; P. Sugden was called in from Kent; a small chapel was taken in Cooper's Gardens, near Shoreditch Church, and speedily opened for religious worship. Mr. Watson was soon recalled to Leeds, and Mr. John Coulson, to whom we are indebted for this information, succeeded him in London. Being in the depth of winter, and the weather very cold, he preferred going the journey on foot, in true apostolic simplicity. It appears he was not more plentifully supplied with money than his predecessors, for when he arrived in London, on January 21st, 1823, he had only three shillings in his pocket! He walked up and down in the snow in search of Mr. Sugden's lodging, and at length happily met him in the street. Shortly afterwards he wrote as follows to Mr. Hugh Bourne:—

"If any place in England wants missionaries, it is London. Some of the inhabitants are the most ignorant, wicked, careless, and wretched people I ever saw. We have twenty members in society, including those on trial. We preach at four places on the Sabbath, and eight on week-days. It is difficult to get houses to preach in.

A garret lets for five shillings a week, bare walls."

Such was the feeble beginning of Primitive Methodism in the mighty metropolis of this kingdom! Messrs. H. Bourne, J. Crawfoot, and J. Benton, had indeed visited London a dozen years before, and laboured there with effect for a few weeks; but were not succeeded by any other preacher. To Leeds circuit, therefore, belongs the honour of establishing a permanent society in London, feeble as it was at the commencement, and comparatively small as was the expense incurred in its maintenance. Mr. Sugden was early recalled to Leeds, and Mr. G. Tetley was sent to supply his place in London. "He was a very agreeable companion," says Mr. Coulson, "and became very useful. We went through great hardships and sufferings that we might not bring heavy expense on Leeds circuit. I frequently went without dinner for the purpose." We subjoin a little additional information furnished by Mr. Tetley:—"The first preachers who were sent to London were Messrs. P. Sugden and W. Watson, but they were shortly succeeded by Messrs. John Coulson and George Tetley, who remained a considerable time in London and its vicinity, preaching the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the open air and in any other place to which they could gain access; but they experienced great difficulties in obtaining suitable places in which to hold their religious services. The first permanent place of worship was a small chapel in Cooper's Gardens. A short time afterwards a room was opened in Gravel Lane, Shadwell, and another at Broadway, Westminster. In these places societies were formed. Among the early members and supporters of the cause were the late Mrs. Sarah Gardner and Mr. John Friskin. Messrs. R. Howchin and W. Wainwright, who for many years have been ministers in Norwich district, became members of society in London mission while I laboured in it. There was considerable instability among the early societies, but some of their members nobly stood by the cause and promoted its prosperity. And the Lord blessed the labours of His servants, making them instrumental in the conversion of sinners, and in doing good in various ways."



Other parts of the connexion made some progress during the year, but we are not able to furnish any particular information. We may, however, state that Scarborough branch of Hull circuit was made into a separate circuit, perhaps prematurely; Brigg and Marshland branches of Scotter circuit were made independent stations; Bradwell and Doncaster were made circuits by Sheffield circuit, Louth by Grimsby, Middleham by Brompton, Pickering by Malton, and Bradford by Leeds circuit. Scarborough had 353 members, Brigg 347, Marshland 447, Bradwell 332, Doncaster 290, Louth 179, Middleham 145, Pickering 200, and Bradford 324.

The conference of 1823 was held at Leeds. The statistics of the connexion were as follows:—202 travelling preachers, 1,435 local preachers, 29,472 members. The increase of travelling preachers for the year was 50, and of members of society 4,254. The number of local preachers was reported now for the first time.

This conference recommended the travelling preachers to form a fund or friendly society among themselves, and appointed a meeting to be held at Hull for the purpose, on August 24th, 1823; but guarded this recommendation by a law forbidding them to beg anything towards its establishment! Allowances should doubtless be made for the circumstances of the connexion at that early period of its history; but it is no marvel that this stringent regulation should have given pain to many of the travelling preachers, and that at their meeting for the establishment of a friendly society, some of them should have expressed their dissatisfaction with the constitution of the connexion, especially if they had reason to believe that the unreasonable regulation proceeded from leading laymen in the body. It is creditable to the preachers who expressed their dissatisfaction on this occasion, that in a missionary meeting held in the evening, "co-operation in the great work of converting the world swallowed up every other consideration," and that they returned to their stations determined to prosecute their labours with unflinching intrepidity. It is honourable, too, to the laymen present at the ensuing conference, that the fore-named regulation was rescinded.

CHAPTER XIV.

Progress of Tunstall Circuit.—Western Mission commenced.—Burland Circuit's Missionary labours at Oswestry.—Oaken Gates Circuit's Mission in South Wales.—Prosperity of Shrewsbury Circuit.—Mission to Welsh Pool and Newtown.—Prosperity of the Norfolk Mission.—Missions in Northamptonshire.—Hull Circuit.—Whitehaven Mission.—Great work at Nenthead, in Alston Moor.—Opening of Brough.—A great revival of religion at Middleton, in Teesdale.—Great increase in Hull Circuit.—Progress in Sunderland and the neighbourhood.—Progress of South Shields Circuit.—Extension of North Shields Circuit.—Names of the new Circuits made during the year.—The Conference of 1824.—Statistics.—New Regulations made respecting Delegation to Conference.

WE now enter upon another year of prosperity, the last we shall meet for the present, several of the succeeding ones being distinguished by declension rather than by progress. Tunstall circuit appears this year to have made Preston Brook branch, in Cheshire, into a separate circuit, and also the large town of Liverpool, each with two travelling preachers. In June, 1823, Tunstall circuit, assisted by Scotter circuit, undertook an extensive mission in the West of England. The missionary efforts of the connexion had already extended in this direction from Staffordshire into the neighbouring counties of Shropshire and Worcestershire. Gloucestershire and Somersetshire were the next counties in which the missionaries belonging to Tunstall circuit began their evangelical labours. Mr. James Bonser, who had been eminently successful for a few years, and had endured many hardships and persecutions, appears to have taken the lead in the western mission. The following letter written from Tewkesbury to Mr. James Steele, of Tunstall, under date of June 18th, 1823, shows

the spirit of deep humility and of melting compassion for perishing sinners in which he entered upon his missionary toils in Gloucestershire:—"Dear father in the gospel, I need help from God every moment. I see all my past labours little indeed. I am saved through mercy, and am still constrained to cry, 'Oh! to grace how great a debtor.' Oh! how may soul feels for sinners. I could breathe my last in entreating them to turn to God. I have of late spent many restless hours in weeping for them. I began my mission on Saturday, June 7th. The next day I preached twice in the open air; the weather was unfavourable, and I caught cold, and have suffered from hoarseness ever since, so that I have found it difficult to preach. As I passed through Worcester the friends there told me that they had more places under their care than they could attend to. They had been to Tewkesbury, sixteen miles on the road to Gloucester. I have preached in this town in the open air. Whilst I was speaking I was interrupted by a constable, and ordered to come down; but I gave no heed to him till I had done, when I was seized by two constables, and taken before a magistrate. I was convicted for preaching out of doors, and for stopping up the highway, though there was plenty of room where I stood, and neither carriage nor horse had to pass while I was preaching. I was desired to find bail. I replied that I did not intend to find any bail; and told the magistrate and his coadjutors that I had been to prison several times, and had gone through showers of rotten eggs, mud, and stones, but that Christ was always present and precious to me in those trying circumstances, and that if they could with a clear conscience send me to prison for persuading sinners to forsake their sins and lead a new life, I was willing to go and suffer there for the gospel's sake. Most of the Dissenting ministers came to speak in my behalf. One of them reasoned very strongly on the necessity of preaching out of doors; and, after some discussion, I was set at liberty. This has made a great stir, and caused much excitement among the people. Twenty-five persons are willing to unite with us here, and at a place three miles distant there are 12

more likeminded. There are several places around which might be visited, and the town and neighbourhood would soon make a branch of a circuit. I have been to some of the country places around Gloucester; but at this time the people are busy in the hay harvest, so that they cannot come to hear preaching on work-day evenings. I am under engagement to be twenty miles from this place on Sunday next, among the cloth manufactories, where I expect a great opening. I hope you will look out for another preacher. Tell the people to pray for me."

The conduct of the Dissenting ministers at Tewkesbury was highly honourable to their Christian character, and merits a grateful record in these pages; but the town and vicinity did not prove to be fruitful soil for Primitive Methodism, or had not a sufficient trial. No permanent societies were established there. Another attempt to establish a mission in the locality was made by Cwm circuit ten or a dozen years later, but after a comparatively short period it was abandoned. These are facts which are not calculated to feed denominational pride and vain glory. In the cloth manufacturing district the missionaries were more successful. In the town of Stroud and the neighbouring villages they preached with their wonted success. They addressed large multitudes in the open air, and a great religious awakening took place. Great numbers who received their first permanent religious impressions under the zealous and pointed preaching of the missionaries, united with other denominations of Christians; but a goodly number early cast in their lot among the people through whose instrumentality they had received spiritual benefit. The mission rapidly extended. Frome, in Somersetshire, and the district around, and also the city of Bristol, soon shared in the evangelical labours of the missionaries. In the connexional magazine for February, 1824, we find the following notice of this mission:—

"The western mission has had to meet with a variety of difficulties, but through the mercy of God it has prospered. One chapel has been built, and another is in forwardness. The theatre at Stroud has been fitted up as a place of worship, and will hold several



hundred persons. The members in the societies amount to 350, and the prospects are flourishing. There are now five travelling preachers stationed in this mission, and more will soon be wanted."

We regret to add that we find no further record of the labours of Mr. James Bonser. From the minutes of conference it appears he continued to travel till 1825, and from the position his name occupies in the stations of preachers for that year it seems probable that he was still in the West of England. Here, it is said, his zeal and usefulness began to decline. His colleagues complained of his exercising undue authority over them, and it was thought that after his marriage the love of worldly gain began to manifest itself in him. Be this as it might, he ceased to be a travelling preacher, located in the neighbourhood of Wrockwardine Wood, in Shropshire, and united with the Wesleyans, among whom he exercised his gifts with acceptance and success as a local preacher for a short time, and then died triumphantly in the Lord, a comparatively young man. His excessive labours when a travelling preacher doubtless weakened his constitution, and probably hastened his death.

Further notices of Tunstall circuit's western mission will be found in a succeeding chapter.

Darlaston circuit carried on successful missionary operations this year at Ludlow, in Shropshire, and in the district around. From information we have received from Mr. H. Leech, and collected from other sources, it is probable that the first missionary, Mr. W. Sanders, was sent thither in the year 1822. It is, however, certain that Darlaston circuit extended to Ludlow and the neighbourhood in the spring of 1823, when Mr. Thomas Norman was labouring there, as appears from his memoir published in the connexional magazine. We are unable to furnish any interesting details of the prosperity of this mission; but it had become so much established that it was made into a separate circuit during this connexional year, under the name of Hopton Bank, and two preachers were stationed to it at the conference of 1824. It



probably extended from Kidderminster, in Worcestershire, to Presteign, and other places in Radnorshire, South Wales; for missionaries from Darlaston circuit had previously visited these towns, and a society of 40 or 50 members had been formed at Presteign above a year before Ludlow and the district was made into a separate circuit.

Burland circuit further extended its missionary operations in the north-western portions of Shropshire during this year. Three years before this time Burland branch had engaged in successful missionary labours in this county; but now the mission was enlarged. In the summer or autumn of 1823 the missionaries visited the town of Oswestry. Here one of them, Mr. W. Doughty, was arrested and sent to Shrewsbury jail. The sight of a preacher of the gospel going to prison for proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation in the open air produced a deep impression upon many minds, and was graciously overruled for the furtherance of evangelical truth. Under date of November 12th, 1823, Mr. Doughty writes to Mr. James Bourne:—"We have a promising work at Oswestry and other places in this part of Burland circuit. At Oswestry we are adding almost weekly." The work continued to prosper in that locality, and in a few years afterwards Oswestry became the head of a good circuit.

Oaken Gates circuit sent a missionary in the spring or summer of 1823 to Blaenavon, in South Wales, where he met with encouraging success, and another was shortly sent to assist him. Under date of August 10th, 1823, Mr. Roles writes to Mr. J. Bourne:—"I am happy to inform you that the work of God is going on well in this mission. Here are about 70 members in society. S. Smith arrived fifteen days ago, and since his coming I have preached twice at seven new places to large congregations. I think there will be a good work at all the places; and we have got invitations to visit many places to which we cannot go at present. At Blaenavon the work is going on well; we have more than 40 persons in society there, and it is very rare to have a class-meeting without one or more joining with us."



Other parts of Oaken Gates circuit were also prospering at this period. Shrewsbury branch was making rapid advancement, and extended its labours to Minsterley and other places, ten or twelve miles to the west. Here a good work began among the lead miners and farmers, many of whom were turned to the Lord, and became useful in his church; and one of them, Mr. Richard Davies, soon entered upon his career as an acceptable and influential travelling preacher, and now sustains the office of general book steward.

Shrewsbury branch appears to have been made into a separate circuit in December, 1824, and to have immediately extended its missionary labours to Welshpool, Newtown, and other neighbouring places in Montgomeryshire, North Wales. Messrs. Ride and Vaughan laboured there for a short time with great success. Mr. Ride says, "Our quarter-day (Oaken Gates circuit's quarterly meeting of December, 1823) agreed that I should go into Shrewsbury circuit for six weeks. I was appointed to go to Welshpool and Newtown where the work of God broke out in a wonderful manner. At a place called Correy, near Newtown, a great effect was produced. On Monday, at noon, January 19th, 1824, I spoke to about 200 persons. The Lord filled me with faith and the Holy Ghost, and the people wept bitterly. After the meeting I went into a house to take some refreshment, and as many of the hearers as could get in followed me. So instead of eating and drinking we began singing and praying, and several professed to find the Lord. The members admitted by me and brother Vaughan about Welshpool and Newtown amount to 90."

In the town of Shrewbury, too, a powerful revival of religion took place at this time. The circuit book steward, writing to Mr. James Bourne, under date of February 4th, 1824, says:—"We are happy to inform you that we have had a great revival. Some scores of souls have been converted, and we have had an increase of society during the last fortnight of 100 members."

Turning to Nottingham district we find proof of the prosperity and extension of the work of God in the Norfolk mission. No



particulars are published, but during the year three new circuits were formed, namely, Fakenham, Norwich, and Lynn. At the conference of 1824 six travelling preachers were appointed to Fakenham circuit, seven to Norwich, and three to Lynn, affording evidence that these circuits were both prosperous and extensive.

Loughborough circuit this year conducted missionary operations in some parts of Northamptonshire. The late zealous and laborious Mr. W. G. Bellham says:—"In 1823, Loughborough circuit sent me to Welton branch, a part of which was in Northamptonshire, and the other part in Warwickshire, and we opened many new places. On Sunday, September 12th, I went to Daventry, a market town in Northamptonshire, and took my stand at the entrance of the town. I began to sing, and soon had a large congregation; and while I sang and prayed all was peaceable. I then mounted a chair and announced my text, when immediately came up some men of the baser sort and shouted, 'No bacon preachers! Church and King for ever!' They then made a rush towards me, lifted me and the chair together, carried me up the street, and clamoured and vociferated tremendously. However, I maintained my position on the chair, and did not fail to warn them to flee from the wrath to come! Then they brought me back again, and I began to preach, but they pulled me down and shouted, 'Let us *Jonathan Barney* him!' They formed a ring, and when I attempted to get out on one side they pushed me to the other, until my strength was quite exhausted. They next rushed upon me, and I fell under them, and was afraid I should lose my life; but the people generally were sympathetic towards me, and God in His mercy delivered me out of the hands of the rebels, with only the loss of my hat and one lap of my coat." An interest, however, was established in this town, and continued for some years, but it was never very flourishing.

Hull circuit greatly prospered this year, and extended its missionary operations further in the north of England. From Carlisle and the vicinity the preachers quickly proceeded to Whitehaven. Mr. Clowes visited that town in August, 1823; but



Messrs. Summersides and Johnson had begun to preach there some weeks previously. Mr. Clowes arrived on the 14th of August. On the 15th he discoursed with effect at Egremont. "On Sunday, August 17th," he says, "I preached in the open air at Whitehaven in the afternoon and evening. The Lord was among us indeed, and the people behaved very well. Brother Summersides and brother Johnson had opened the place a few weeks before."

A good interest was soon established at Whitehaven, and several of the neighbouring towns and villages were greatly benefited by the labours of the missionaries. "On Sunday, October 5th," says Mr. Clowes, "I walked from Harrington in the wet, preached three times, and led the class at Whitehaven. The Lord was with us. The next day I spoke there again; the devil roared, but good was done; one man could not sleep that night through deep conviction of sin. On the Friday following I preached at Cleator. It was very wet, but a great many people came, and behaved very well, except one man, who, when I was speaking of the Lord being present everywhere, said he never heard such a fool in all his life. I replied, that so the infidels might say to Noah when he was warning them of their danger; but that the scales were turned when the floods came and took them all away. Some persons wept much, and I formed a society of 6 members. I was wet both with rain and with sweat, but the Lord preserved me from harm.

"Sunday, October 12th. We held a camp-meeting on Harris Moor, near Whitehaven. The morning was very cold, but the power of God was felt; there was a cry for mercy among the people, and four persons found liberty. But we did not continue the meeting all day upon the Moor, as rain came on. We therefore conducted a service in our preaching-house in Fox-lane, and in the evening held a lovefeast there. The people spoke freely of the goodness of God, and towards the close of the speaking, some began to cry aloud for mercy. Truly there was a noise and a shaking among the dry bones; but in a little time bone came to

its bone, and breath from the four winds came into them, and there was a resurrection unto life. About 10 found liberty."

On Sunday, November 9th, Mr. Clowes preached with effect at Workington, and gave tickets of membership to 30 persons. He also visited Parton, Dissington, Low Mill, and St. Bees, and met with more or less success. At the end of November, he says: "The number of members in Carlisle branch this quarter is 212, and in the mission at Whitehaven 182. These have been received in about four months." Carlisle and the associated places had been visited somewhat more than a year, and the societies were deemed sufficiently established to be made into a separate circuit, being capable both of self-government and of self-support. This branch was accordingly made into a circuit at Hull circuit's December quarterly meeting.

In the year 1823 the missionaries belonging to Hull circuit also extended their labours into the north-eastern part of the county of Cumberland. Nenthead, in Alston Moor, four or five miles eastward of Alston, was visited with great success. "The inhabitants having heard of our operations in Weardale," says Mr. Batty, "invited us to visit them, with which invitation we complied in the spring of 1823. Two of my colleagues went thither before I did, and the way opened in a remarkable manner. Numbers who had not been in the habit of attending any place of worship came to hear us. Many of the people had been accustomed to spend the Sabbath in the fields, or upon the *fells* (moors or commons) looking at their sheep and cattle. But when the rumour spread that the 'Ranters,' as we were then frequently called, were coming, the name being new, there was great excitement in the district, and the people from far and near came to see what we were like and to hear what we should say. Before they heard us some of them said we were outlandish men, and others said we were radicals (political Radical Reformers) though called by another name. Great numbers, however, attended our ministry, and many received the word with all readiness of mind." At first the missionaries could only visit this locality once a fortnight on



work-days, and not on the Sabbath at all. Yet the Lord worked mightily with them, a great awakening took place among the inhabitants, and numbers were made partakers of regenerating grace. "In the course of six months," says Mr. Batty, "we had a society of 120 members in Nenthead, so mightily did the work of the Lord grow and prevail. Numbers were also induced by some means to join with other societies, which was then generally the case on our missions."

Mr. Isaac Hornby, one of the stewards over the lead mines in the district, received spiritual benefit through the labours of the missionaries, gave them a hearty reception at his dwelling, rendered efficient support to the infant cause, became a class-leader, and a few years afterwards died happy in the Lord.

Some striking and singular circumstances occurred in this locality which illustrate the depth and extent of the religious awakening which took place under the zealous preaching of the missionaries. One of these circumstances may be recorded. A man who had attended the preaching for some time was going to his work one morning, when hearing a neighbour at prayer he felt a desire to go in and join in the exercise, and began to direct his steps towards his neighbour's dwelling; but he was seized with such deep convictions of sin, and brought into such distress and alarm, that he nearly lost his bodily strength, so that he could not reach the door, but leaned against the wall to keep himself from falling, and there began to cry to the Lord to have mercy upon him. Some of the neighbours hearing a noise came out to see what was the matter, and when they saw him in this position and heard him praying, one called another till a goodly number was assembled. But the man was so earnestly engaged in penitential supplications that he was not for a time aware of their presence. When he had done praying, and looked about him, to his great astonishment he saw many of his neighbours standing round him in tears. He, however, was neither ashamed nor intimidated, but began to warn them of their danger and to exhort them to turn from their sins and to walk in the way to heaven, saying, "We

are all going to hell together." He and his wife were soon afterwards made happy in the love of God, as were also two of his brothers and their wives, and many of their neighbours.

Soon afterwards Mr. Batty visited Brough and other places in the north-eastern part of Westmoreland. "Brough," he says, "is situated in a very pleasant dale, and was once a place of considerable note. There are the ruins of a castle and other relics of antiquity in the neighbourhood. There is only one principal street, and the road from Barnard castle to Penrith and Carlisle runs through it. It is about seventeen miles from Barnard castle, and about twenty-two from Penrith. On the day I first visited Brough, I set out for the purpose about nine o'clock in the morning from Middleton, in Teesdale, where I had breakfasted with a friend who had commended me to the grace of God. I had to walk over lofty hills and mountains for about 15 miles, but when I caught a view of the vicinity of Brough and beheld the beautiful scenery, my heart rejoiced at the goodness of God to man. The prospect was enchanting. On one hand the Pikep mountains, resembling a sugar loaf in form, reared their lofty summits; on the other were the silvery lakes of Westmoreland, intermingled with other lofty pikes connected with another ridge of mountains. Between the lofty eminence on which I stood and the distant hills and lakes a rich and fertile valley extended as far as the eye could reach; the beautiful river Eden winding through the midst. At the foot of the eminence was the pleasant little town of Brough, with the rough-cast but whitewashed walls of its houses and other buildings, which, with the sun shining brightly upon them, made a very splendid appearance."

Mr. Batty commenced his evangelical labours here by preaching in the open air on the evening of the day on which he arrived. He stood upon a horse-block in front of a public house with the permission of the landlady, and addressed a considerable assembly, drawn together principally through motives of curiosity. At the close of his sermon he informed his hearers to what community he belonged, and what was his object in visiting the place. He was



entertained for the night at the house of a friendly woman at Brough Sowerby, a village about a mile from Brough. His kind hostess was soon afterwards brought to God, and a flourishing society was established at the place of her residence. Good also was effected at Brough, and many souls were "turned from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God." An old gentleman, who had been a farmer, but who had retired from business, kindly lent the missionaries his barn to preach in, and otherwise countenanced their pious efforts. Several of the principal men of the town, however, were opposed to them, and did all in their power to hinder and annoy them. Some of them came very rudely into the barn one night while Mr. Batty was preaching, and shewed by their behaviour and conversation that they neither understood the law of the land respecting religious worship, nor the gospel of Jesus Christ, nor the conduct becoming gentlemen. They were apparently disconcerted on that occasion by the preacher's ready replies to their ignorant assertions, and his superior legal knowledge to theirs, and after some time they quietly left the meeting.

Mr. Batty announced that evening that he intended to preach at the Cross on the following Sunday night. His timid friends endeavoured to dissuade him from the attempt, but he was fearless of consequences, and true to his purpose. The day arrived. At seven o'clock in the morning he attended a prayer-meeting, and was refreshed in spirit. At nine he preached at Brough Sowerby, and led a class, which he was grateful to find was going on well. He then walked to Kirby Stephen, where he preached in the afternoon, and led another class. After taking tea he returned to Brough, passing through Brough Sowerby, where his friends were waiting to accompany him to the scene of anticipated conflict. On coming within half a mile of Brough nearly a hundred persons met him in order to assist in singing to the Cross. They immediately began to sing one of their favourite hymns, and proceeded joyously to the appointed place. When they arrived there, several of the gentlemen opposed to them were standing upon the Cross,

and indignantly declared that no such proceedings should be allowed there. Mr. Batty took no notice of their threatenings, and when he and his friends had finished singing the hymn they had chosen, he went to the other side of the Cross to that on which the gentlemen were standing, some boys who stood upon it came down at his request, and he ascended, and began to deliver a prudent address on the religious privileges of Englishmen and the protection afforded by the laws of the land, shewing the gratitude owing to the government and to God on these accounts. The gentlemen listened attentively to what he said, and then went down from the Cross, and stood quietly at the outskirts of the congregation till he had done preaching. Two of the gentlemen, it was said, went to the clergyman who lived near to inquire what was best to be done with the preacher and his friends, and the clergyman very wisely replied, that it was best to let them alone.

An unusually large congregation was present on the occasion. Some had come to see the preacher pulled down, for they expected this would be the case,—some to protect him, if necessary,—and others with the serious intention of hearing words by which they might be saved. Happily, the service terminated without disturbance, and a prayer-meeting was announced to be held in the barn across the green, the usual place of meeting, to which the people flocked and soon filled it. Mr. Batty had some altercation with the "gentlemen" as he crossed the green, but they were soon put to silence, and he quickly followed the devout portion of his congregation to the crowded barn. After a powerful prayer-meeting had been held for some time, he closed the service by pronouncing the benediction. But as not one would go away he preached another sermon, a few more prayed, and he concluded the service again. Still not one person would move. A few more prayers were therefore offered to God, and then Mr. Batty attempted to dismiss the people a third time, but they were as reluctant as before to depart. He finally said, "I have attended two prayer-meetings to-day, have led two classes, have walked about nine miles, and have preached four times, and I am now



weary. I am going into the house adjoining, and those who are determined to give their hearts to God may follow me!" Several of them accordingly followed him into the house, and four of them found freedom there from the bondage of sin.

Foiled in their attempts to create disturbance on the Sabbath, the "gentlemen" before named met at the head inn on the next day, to hold a consulation respecting the proceedings of Mr. Batty and his associates, and then sent the crier through the town, "to publish that a vestry-meeting would be held in the evening, in order to put down all midnight revelling and ranting." A friend of the missionaries requested the crier to call upon him as soon as he had done, as he also wished something to be cried. He and his brother consulted several Acts of Parliament, and ordered the crier to publish that the laws against tippling and riotous midnight revels at public houses, and against gambling, buying and selling, and other evil practices on the Sabbath-day, and other laws for suppressing vice and immorality, would be put in force; and notice duly given to churchwardens and constables, who, in case of neglect, would be presented at the Bishop's court or quarter sessions. "This intervention on the part of our friend," says Mr. Batty, "completely quashed the vestry-meeting; it was never held while I remained in the country,—and after this publication we went on quietly, and had no more disturbance. A glorious work broke out immediately, and in a fortnight we added 30 souls to our society; and the work was both genuine and deep. Some of the most wicked characters, and others less so, were brought to the knowledge of the truth, 'and there was great joy in that town.' The old farmer who lent us his barn was also converted, and gave us a piece of land, on which a chapel was erected!"

Middleton, in Teesdale, whence Mr. Batty started on his journey to Brough, was visited by him and his colleagues in the autumn of 1823. They preached in the open-air, and thereby attracted numbers who had not been in the habit of attending any place of worship, and religious impressions were soon made upon many of

their minds. In the month of May, 1824, Mr. Joseph Grieves, who has for above thirty years been a respected and useful travelling preacher, found peace with God, and he and two or three others who had been partakers of the same blessing, formed themselves into a class, towards the end of the same month. They were not favoured with Sabbath preaching for some months afterwards; but they held prayer-meetings in dwelling houses, two or three times a week, and on Sabbath evenings,—and as they had been ring-leaders in wickedness, many went through curiosity to hear what kind of prayers they could make. A blessed revival of religion soon followed, and numbers where brought to God, chiefly in meetings for prayer. Messrs. Grieves, Leekley, Rain, and Collinson, soon began to exhort in public, and they and others of Middleton Society opened several places in the upper part of Teesdale and within the borders of Yorkshire, namely, Bowlees, Harwood, Forest, &c. The Middleton society soon became numerous and powerful; many of its members were distinguished for their zeal and usefulness, and exerted a beneficial influence in the locality by their consistent walk and devotional habits. A chapel was raised in due time, which has since been enlarged twice or thrice, and the society connected with it has rendered great service to the denomination in various ways.

The prosperity of the work of God in the various branches and missions of Hull circuit was so great during this connexional year, that the increase of members from March to September was 1275! From September to December it was 498, and from December to March 691. Total for the year 2464!

A large proportion of the increase of members from March to September was realized in Sunderland and South Shields, and in the neighbouring collieries. Mr. Thomas Nelson laboured in these places with extraordinary power and effect. The extracts from his journal, published in the connexional magazine, show that his preaching was then generally in the open air, and was attended by large multitudes, who listened with profound attention to his

weighty and soul-stirring discourses. We subjoin an extract which details the close of his labours there:—

"Monday, August 25th, 1823. Attended the preparatory quarter-day at Sunderland. Last year at this time we had in Sunderland 6 persons in society and 1 leader; but now we have 274 members, 11 leaders, and a very large chapel building. The increase in this branch for this quarter is 459. What has God wrought!

"In the evening preached my farewell sermon in the open air to thousands of people, and it was one of the most powerful times I ever had. One woman fell to the ground, and obtained liberty. We then retired to our large room, in order to hold a kind of watch-night. I cannot say how many professed to get liberty, but the meeting continued until next morning. Many were seized as if with fits, but the Lord soon set them free. Shall I say that this has been one of the best quarters I ever saw? I have preached nearly every sermon in the open air, and have seen the good effects of the practice."

Several new circuits were made from Hull circuit during this year, the prosperity of some of which we must briefly record.

Sunderland and Stockton branches were made into one circuit at Hull September quarterly meeting, 1823, and made rapid progress during the next six months. Under date of October 15th, 1823, the superintendent writes,—"Scarcely a year has elapsed since our cause was introduced into the northern part of this circuit, but though the period is short, yet abundant fruit has appeared. A glorious work has gone on for some time in Sunderland and the neighbouring collieries. In Sunderland and Monkwearmouth, on the opposite side of the river, we have nearly 400 members; and in Lord Steward's and Squire Lambton's collieries we have near 400 more. Our congregations are immensely large, and some of the most abandoned characters have tasted that the Lord is gracious. It would do any of the lovers of Jesus good to see the dear colliers sometimes under the word. On some occasions they are constrained to come unwashed to the preaching, or else be too

late for the sermon; and large tears rolling down their black cheeks, leaving white streaks behind, pourtray what their hearts feel. Their zealous exertions in the cause of God would make almost any one love them." The colliers here mentioned lived south of the Wear, at New Penshaw, Penshaw Staithes, Shiney Row, Lumley, Philadelphia, Newbottle, East and West Rainton, Hetton, Easington Lane, &c.; and as great a reformation took place among them, through the blessing of God on the labours of the missionaries, as was witnessed among the pitmen north of the Tyne.

In the town of Sunderland the work of God also continued to spread, and numbers of sinners were turned from the error of their ways. Under date of March 16th, 1824, the superintendent writes to Mr. Bourne,—"This last quarter we have had some blessed revivals in many places in this circuit; in Sunderland alone we have had an increase of 127 members. On the 1st of this month we had our quarterly meeting, when we found an increase of not less than 300 souls. We have now nearly 1,300 members in this young circuit, about 700 of whom have been added during the last half year."

South Shields, and the colliery district lying between the Tyne and the Wear, were made into a separate circuit in September, 1823, at the same quarterly meeting at which Sunderland and Stockton branches were made into a circuit; and this new circuit also made rapid advancement during the year. Three months after its formation Mr. Branfoot, the superintendent, writing to the editor of the magazine, says: "I am glad to inform you that the work of the Lord is prospering here. This last quarter our increase of members is 140. We have now 551 members in the circuit. We have a large and commodious chapel, which seats near nine hundred persons, and our temporal concerns are in a good state." Four or five months later he writes,—"The work of God in this circuit is great, glorious, and extensive. In all parts of it the work has been very rapid, and some of the most depraved characters have been brought to the blood of sprinkling, and are

now savingly acquainted with the Lord Jesus." A great work of grace was witnessed especially at Hebburn, a colliery a few miles from Shields. Mr. Branfoot says,—"It is only a year since we first went to Hebburn, and now we have six classes and 100 members." The society in the town also prospered greatly. On the 7th of March, 1824, a lovefeast was held there, at which it was supposed twenty souls were brought into Christian liberty. At the quarterly meeting held on the following day, the town society appears to have numbered 300 members. "This is the second quarter day since South Shields was made into a circuit," says Mr. Branfoot, "and our increase for the half year is 340. In South Shields town we have 300 members."

Crossing the Tyne to North Shields, we happily meet with similar tokens of religious prosperity. Mr. Jeremiah Gilbert was appointed to superintend this circuit by the conference of 1823. He arrived on the 1st of July, and was highly gratified with the evidence of religious prosperity which he beheld. He says,—"the Lord is doing a great work in this part of the country. Thomas and John Nelson have been made a blessing." On the 20th, he and his brethren held a camp-meeting on Scaffold Hill, in the neighbourhood of North Shields. Thousands of persons attended, and many sinners were brought to the Saviour. In the evening a lovefeast was held in the open air, when several other persons were made happy in the love of God.

The following Sabbath he spent at Newcastle and the neighbourhood, with similar satisfaction and success. In the morning he preached at Ballast Hills, to a congregation of a thousand persons, according to his estimation, when a cry for mercy was heard, and salvation obtained. In the afternoon he conducted a powerful lovefeast at Newcastle, when ten persons found the liberty of the gospel; and in a prayer-meeting, held after preaching in the open air in the evening, three more mourners were comforted.

The Butcher's Hall had then been occupied for eight or nine months as a place of worship for the improving society, which at that time numbered nearly 100 members. The good work con-

tinued so to prosper in this large town and the vicinity, that it became the head of a separate circuit in the month of December following. Writing from North Shields, under date of December 31st, 1823, Mr. Gilbert says,—"Last quarter-day we made Newcastle-upon-Tyne into a circuit, and Morpeth into a branch. When I came hither last midsummer there were three travelling preachers, and the number of members given in at the last conference was about 335. Jabez prayed,—'Oh, that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast!' So prayed the preachers of North Shields circuit last July, and the Lord has enlarged their coast. We have now three travelling preachers stationed at North Shields, three at Newcastle, and one at Morpeth; and in the whole there are near 800 members of society." A few months after this, one of the young travelling preachers, Mr. George Wallace, finished his course, and died in peace. His public career was brief, but useful, and his death was in harmony with his Christian character and conduct. The circuit sustained some loss by his illness and death, but the good work continued to prosper. Newcastle circuit also made advancement; from December, 1823, to June 1824, it was favoured with an increase of above 100 members, and a chapel capable of seating five or six hundred persons, was taken on rent.

Hexham branch also made such progress during this year, that it became the head of a circuit, and at the conference of 1824 had four travelling preachers stationed to it.

The total number of circuits made during this connexional year was twenty-four: namely, Shrewsbury, Preston Brook, Worcester, Hopton Bank, Liverpool, Clitheroe, Huddersfield, Blackburn, Fakenham, Norwich, Lynn, Cambridge, Welton, Balderton, Howden, Dewsbury, Sunderland, South Shields, Newcastle, Carlisle, Hexham, Whitby, Keighley, and Otley.

This rapid increase of circuits, while it called for gratitude to the Author of all good, was not unaccompanied by some painful solicitude in the minds of influential and thoughtful persons in the connexion, on the ground of the increased expense and other inconveniences which would result from the augmented number of

delegates, that would thereby be sent to the annual meeting or conference.

The conference of this year was held at Halifax. The number of members reported was 33,507. Increase for the year, 4,035; a smaller number than the preceding accounts of the prosperity of Hull circuit and others would have led us to expect, affording evidence of the almost stationery condition of many of the circuits, if not of the retrograde movements of some.

A new regulation was made respecting the number of delegates to be sent to the conference. The connexion was arranged in four districts, and it was decided that nine delegates should be sent from each district; these, with the editor, book-steward, and the president of the managing committee at Hull, would only amount to thirty-nine, a much smaller number than the former regulations would have required for the enlarged state of the connexion. This was an economical arrangement, harmonizing with the habits and views of the leading minds in the body, and agreeing with its pecuniary resources and other circumstances.

Some additional regulations were also made respecting the making of new circuits, apparently with the view of preventing circuits being made prematurely. It was now decided that in making new circuits, five things should be considered or required. 1. That the business of the whole circuit was too much to be transacted in one day. 2. That in the branch or part proposed to be made into a new circuit, there was reason to believe that there was a sufficient number of experienced persons to conduct its business. 3. That one travelling preacher, or more, suitable for such new circuit, could be conveniently stationed to it. 4. That the part or branch in question contained a suitable person whom the parent circuit could accredit to the Book-room as a circuit book-steward. 5. The decision of the parent circuit's quarterly meeting agreeing to such part or branch being made into a separate circuit. But to guard this last requirement against abuse, another regulation was made providing for societies or branches, under certain circumstances, to be made into new circuits by the general committee or conference, without the sanction of the parent circuit.

CHAPTER XV.

Tunstall Circuit's Western Mission.—Shrewsbury Circuit's Mission in Wiltshire.—Mission in the Forest of Dean.—Prosperity of Blaenavon Mission.—Mission in Herefordshire.—Prosperity of Darlaston Circuit.—Opening of Birmingham.—Oxfordshire Mission.—First visit to the City of Oxford.—Prosperity of Lynn Circuit.—Opening of Litcham.—Norwich District made.—Statistics of the District at the Conference of 1828.—Hull Circuit's Mission in Cornwall.—Plymouth visited by Mr. CLOWES and others.—Mission to Scotland.—Messrs. CLEWER and OLIVER sent to Edinburgh.—Mr. N. WEST's Division.—Mission to Glasgow.—A General Missionary Committee formed.—Report of its first Mission in Pembrokeshire—Declension in the Connexion notwithstanding its missionary labours.—Usefulness of Mr. HUGH BOURNE in the critical period.

IN the present chapter we purpose to sketch the proceedings of the connexion during a period of four years, extending from the conference of 1824 to that of 1828. This was a period of considerable importance and of painful trial; the borders of the connexion were enlarged considerably in the western and northern portions of the kingdom, but many of the recently formed circuits, and some of the older ones, suffered materially. We will first briefly narrate the missionary labours of the connexion, as far as we have been able to obtain information on the subject, and then notice the declension which took place in many stations.

We begin with the missionary labours of Tunstall circuit. In a former chapter we glanced at the commencement of the Western Mission. This mission embraced some of the most populous portions of Gloucestershire and Somersetshire, and ultimately extended into the county of Dorset. The city of Bristol shared for a time in the labours of the missionaries, and a small society was formed,



which, however, soon became extinct. There is reason to believe that this large city did not receive all the attention which its importance merited, and that the missionary efforts of the connexion therein were of too feeble a character to ensure much success. Some years later, however, more suitable efforts were employed there by a neighbouring circuit, which happily proved more successful, as we shall record in the proper place.

The populous neighbourhood of Stroud was more carefully and vigorously worked than the city of Bristol and its immediate vicinity, and permanent societies were established and considerable good was effected. Frome and the neighbourhood likewise shared in the zealous labours of the missionaries sent by Tunstall circuit, and beneficial impressions were made upon the minds of many of the inhabitants. The following letter from Mr. W. Lea, one of the missionaries, to the circuit steward at Tunstall, will shew that the mission was progressing in 1825. Under date of February 12th, of that year, Mr. L. writes—"The cause is prospering much in this mission. The society in Frome has been a little unsettled; but the members are now getting more united, and more persons are joining with us. Our congregations are large. The Lord is also working throughout the mission—he is saving some of the vilest of sinners, and souls are weekly added to our number. Our congregations are large at every place, and we have invitations to visit other places. I purpose to visit some next week which are between Frome and Bristol, near to the city of Wells. Pray for me, that the God of all grace may strengthen me with all might by his Spirit in the inner man."

In the month of July in the following year, Mr. W. Paddison conducted two effective camp-meetings in this locality, one at Clandown and the other at Nunney, at both of which considerable good was done. Speaking of the state of the Frome branch generally, Mr. P. says,—"The work of God appears to be rising in many parts: the congregations at many places are good, fresh members are joining with us, and the old ones are getting more established."

In August of this year (1826) we find that the missionaries labouring at Frome and the neighbourhood had begun to preach at Trowbridge, in Wiltshire, and at Motcombe, Enmore Green, and other places in the neighbourhood of Shaftesbury, in Dorsetshire, and were cheered with encouraging prospects of success.

On Tuesday, August 29th, 1826, a large room was opened at Enmore Green, and a society of 10 persons was formed. Small societies were also formed about the same time at other places; and deep impressions were produced upon the minds of multitudes by the labours of the missionaries. Frome branch was soon after the last-named date made into a separate circuit, having three travelling preachers stationed to it by the conference of 1827. The Dorsetshire part of the circuit continued to progress so rapidly, that during the ensuing year Motcombe became the head of a new circuit. We find it upon the stations of 1828, with two travelling preachers appointed to it. A glorious work had progressed in many of the surrounding villages, and multitudes had turned to the Lord.

The preachers from Frome also visited the city of Bath, and formed a promising society; and in June, 1828, the circuit appointed the late Mr. W. Towler to reside there, and devote his entire labours to the city and immediate neighbourhood, which were productive of much good.

The year after Tunstall circuit began missionary operations in Gloucestershire and Somersetshire, Shrewsbury circuit sent Mr. S. Heath as a missionary to the neighbouring county of Wilts. He was appointed to Shrewsbury circuit by the conference of 1824; and after travelling therein about four months, a mission belonging to that circuit which extended into Wales, was relinquished on some account, and the circuit had then a preacher to spare. Mr. Heath volunteered to open a mission, and his offer was accepted. We are unable to judge of the prudence or otherwise of the Welsh mission being abandoned. In most cases the relinquishment of missions is to be deeply deplored, and perhaps seldom to be justified. Mr. Heath's mission into the west of England, however,

evidently met with the Divine approval, and was crowned with signal success. At Cirencester in Gloucestershire, now the head of a circuit, he met with cruel treatment, being stoned and otherwise ill-used, and did not succeed in establishing a permanent society, though many sinners were convinced under his earnest preaching in the open-air, several of whom united with other christian churches. A few miles south-eastward, in the north-western portion of Wiltshire, he found a great need of earnest evangelical preaching, and happily reaped a large harvest of precious souls. In a district of many miles extent, there were very few Dissenters of any denomination, and no evangelical clergymen of the established church. Deplorable ignorance of divine things, daring wickedness, and barbarous practices, were fearfully prevalent. Not unfrequently young men might be seen playing at ball against church walls on the Sabbath-day! In many places the cruel practice of *backswording* was common. On a certain day in the year, strong fearless men came crowding into the villages or towns, filling the streets, with large cudgels in their hands, to contend with each other for the victory. With savage ferocity they engaged in the contest, earnestly striving to break the skulls of their fellow-combatants. Fiendish yells, loud shrieks, horrid imprecations, and deep groans, rent the air; and mangled flesh, broken bones, and pools of blood met the eye in every direction. In these savage encounters many were maimed, and otherwise seriously injured for life, and diabolical passions were inflamed in their minds. A Wesleyan minister who paid a transient visit to this district, shocked with the scene just described, published an account in the newspaper, with a view to put an end to the shameless barbarity; a well-meant effort, but comparatively powerless, for such a purpose. The earnest preaching of the Gospel in the open-air was the most likely means to check the evil, and to abolish the custom altogether. The Primitive Methodist missionaries undertook this arduous task. They stood up in the streets, and with fearless courage proclaimed the solemn truths of revelation. Their discourses would not have charmed fastidious

hearers with harmonious periods and smoothly flowing diction. But few such hearers, if any, surrounded them. Multitudes were drawn by curiosity to listen to their orations, most of whom seldom entered church or chapel, and among whom fine language and smooth sentences would have been comparatively useless. To arrest their attention, communicate instruction to their dull minds, awaken their consciences, and lead them in penitence and faith to the Saviour of guilty men, these classes required the important truths of the gospel delivered in plain strong language, with homely illustrations, and with earnestness of manner and depth of feeling, like the earnestness and feeling which themselves shewed in their vicious practices. And Mr. Heath and his fellow-labourers proclaimed these grand and glorious truths in language of this character, and in this earnest, feeling manner, "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;" and great was their success. In a few months Mr. Heath had seen so much good effected, and the prospect of usefulness and support was so cheering, that he wrote to Shrewsbury for another preacher, and obtained one. In the magazine for March, 1825, we meet with the following notice: "Some time ago our Shrewsbury circuit opened a mission in the parts bordering on the Tunstall circuit's western mission. The missionaries had to suffer a great deal at first, but by the grace of God they have succeeded. The following contains the substance of a letter sent to the General Book Steward from a preacher in this mission,—"January 29th, 1825, Dear Brother in the Lord, the goodness of God is very great towards us in this mission. I have sent to Shrewsbury for another preacher, and the friends there have sent brother Vaughan. The Lord of Hosts is with us, and is pouring out his Spirit in a powerful manner, and is bringing many to himself. We have had a very great increase in the classes this week. Truly the harvest is great. We have generally to preach twice a day. I have preached twelve times this week."

Mr. Vaughan, here mentioned, was a man of slender abilities, but of ardent zeal, and full of compassion for perishing souls. He entered with all his heart into the missionary work in this

district, and was honoured of God in the conversion of many sinners. He laboured earnestly and with encouraging success for a few years afterwards, and then died in triumph, and went to his reward in heaven. The work of God continuing to prosper in this part of Wiltshire, Mr. Richard Davies was added to the number of the missionaries in March, 1825. Numerous and striking conversions occurred at many places, and powerful societies were soon established. At Brinkworth, a large village about midway between the towns of Malmesbury and Wootton Bassett, many of the vilest characters were converted from the error of their ways. Such was the notorious wickedness of many of the inhabitants, that for years it had been deemed perilous for a stranger to ride through the village alone; and when the zealous missionaries began to preach the gospel among these ruffians, they had for a time to endure considerable persecution. The clergyman of the parish was a magistrate, but he was not a minister of evangelical sentiments, and was bitterly opposed to the efforts made by others to enlighten and convert his parishioners. He would not therefore enforce the laws of the land for the protection of the missionaries, if he could by any means avoid it, and was honest enough to tell them so. But their Divine Master was with them, and crowned their labours with His signal blessing. Many who went to hear them with their pockets filled with stones to throw at them, were arrested in their wicked career before they could carry their purposes into execution. Mingling with the crowd, while they waited for an opportunity to begin to stone the preacher, they heard some portions of gospel truth, and were "pricked in their hearts" by "the sword of the Spirit;" then quietly and stealthily dropping one stone after another, till they had emptied their pockets, they joined in penitential cries to God to blot out their transgressions and to renew their hearts. Several of these became champions in the cause of Christ, and zealous useful local preachers. A great reformation soon took place among the inhabitants generally, and a powerful society was established, which shortly became the head of a circuit.

At Wootton Bassett, the missionaries also laboured with great success, notwithstanding the persecutions they had to endure. Mr. Heath had the courage to stand up in the main street amidst the crowd who were engaged in the savage practice of "backswording," and in solemn earnestness preached on death and judgment, heaven and hell. The mayor's pious zeal was aroused at this innovation, and he sent a constable to bring the preacher into his presence. His love of civilisation and his regard for public order did not induce him to move a finger in opposition to the disgraceful proceedings and barbarous scenes witnessed around him; but for a Dissenting minister to have the audacity to preach in the streets he regarded as intolerable. The missionary, however, understood the law of the land respecting open air preaching better than his worship, and after some altercation, "finding nothing whereof he could accuse him," he allowed Mr. Heath to depart, who went directly to the place where he had been standing, and finished his earnest and awakening sermon. And an awakening sermon it proved to many. An impression was made upon the minds of multitudes, which was not speedily erased. Numbers from surrounding villages left the town under deep convictions of sin, and with pious resolves to forsake their evil practices. Many of the inhabitants of Wootton Bassett also received much spiritual profit on this memorable day, which led them to seek a saving interest in Christ, and enabled them henceforth to walk in newness of life. A long room which had been employed as a ball-room in connection with a public-house, was soon afterwards taken on rent, and for some time was used as a place of worship. Very exciting scenes were frequently witnessed there. Persecutors often managed to put out the lights, and in various ways to annoy and disturb the serious worshippers. But the work of God continued to prosper. Some of the persecutors were brought before the magistrates and fined; others were brought to the feet of Jesus as suppliants for mercy, and became devout associates of those whom they had persecuted. A flourishing society was established, and the cruel and barbarous practice

of "backswording" entirely abolished in the town.

At Malmesbury, where the celebrated infidel Hobbes formerly resided, many of the inhabitants appeared to have inherited his persecuting spirit. A mob of ruffians often assailed the missionaries when they attempted to preach the gospel of Christ for the salvation of men, and these were encouraged in their wicked and cruel acts by persons in higher rank, and invested with legal authority, who gave them drink for the purpose. A dwelling-house was licensed for preaching, the windows of which were often broken to pieces. Intestines of beasts and all manner of filth were thrown in upon the people. On one occasion, during service, an impious man got the Bible out of the preacher's hand, and put it into a pot then boiling on the fire! He was brought up before the civil authorities, and fined *one shilling and fourpence* for his impious deed! These facts were told us in the neighbourhood not long after they occurred. Amidst brutal persecution and the most determined opposition, the missionaries prosecuted their zealous and persevering labours in that town for some time, but though some good was effected, they deemed it prudent to relinquish the place for a period. At Cricklade, a town about the same distance from Wootton Bassett as Malmesbury, the missionaries were more successful. Many sinners were awakened under their earnest preaching, and a society was established. But persecution raged here also; so much so, that for a time the members of the society could seldom go out into the streets on their ordinary business without being pelted with stones!

Other towns more remote were visited ere the expiration of the year 1825, and most of the important villages around, and more or less success was realized. "At the end of the year," says Mr. Davies, "the mission embraced the following towns:—Malmesbury, Chippenham, Wootton Bassett, Swindon, Cricklade, Cirencester, Calne, and Devizes, and all the villages of note round about, Brinkworth and Seagry being the best of them." At several of these towns, however, no establishment was then effected. At the last-named village a good steady society was

early formed, and a chapel built, the first Primitive Methodist chapel erected in Wiltshire. Soon afterwards a small one was built at Broad Town, near Wootton Bassett, where the large family of the Woodwards, Mr. W. Miles, and others, rendered efficient service to the infant cause. A neat chapel was next built at the village of Clack, and in 1828 a commodious one was opened at Brinkworth. Village churches, however, rose much faster than chapels for them to worship in. Christian societies, composed of lively earnest converts, full of simplicity and love, met for worship in cottages, barns, or the open air; and, "walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." In the year 1826 this mission was made into Brinkworth circuit, to which five travelling preachers were appointed at the following conference. And so liberally had the congregations and societies contributed towards the support of the missionaries who had laboured among them, that no demand had been made upon the funds of Shrewsbury circuit. On the contrary, that circuit derived considerable pecuniary benefit from the profits of many hymn-books and magazines sold on the mission! In March, 1828, this new circuit employed four travelling preachers, and contained 500 members, above forty of whom were local preachers and exhorters, besides those in Stroud branch, which had been annexed thereto.

Numerous other interesting facts might be detailed of the success of the missionaries at various places, and of the persecutions and hardships they endured; but the limits of this work, and a regard to other missions, forbid enlargement. In succeeding chapters we shall have to chronicle the missionary efforts of this flourishing and powerful circuit. Messrs. Heath, Vaughan, Davies, Holloway, Foizey, and others, who first laboured in this district, merited the gratitude and support they received, and reflected credit upon the community to which they belonged. But historic truth and fidelity require us to add, that the useful and laborious career of Mr. Heath was only of a few years' continuance. In 1829 he located in this circuit, and some years afterwards his improper conduct wounded the cause which he had



assisted to establish, and he subsequently emigrated to America. It is mournful to meet with such an instance of unfaithfulness in a person of such usefulness as he had been for several years, and it impressively reminds us of the apostolic admonition, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

About the time that Shrewsbury circuit sent Mr. Heath as a missionary into Wiltshire, Oaken Gates circuit sent Mr. J. Roles to open a mission among the miners in the Forest of Dean, in Gloucestershire, where he met with an encouraging measure of success. The late Mr. Edward Beard also laboured in this mission for a time, and preached at Ross and other places in the east of Herefordshire. But his toils and privations were so severe that they greatly impaired his health, and injured his constitution; so much so that he was compelled to relinquish the itinerancy. He located in his native circuit, was very acceptable and useful as a local preacher, and died happy in the Lord near Oaken Gates, in 1845, at the age of forty years. Some parts of this mission were not very fruitful, but it prospered encouragingly on the whole. From a brief notice written by Mr. Joseph Harrison, in December, 1826, we learn that the work of God was then going on well in the district. The mission had already extended to the city of Hereford, where considerable good had been effected. From the journal of another preacher we learn that preaching was begun in that city in August, 1826, if not earlier, and that there was a small society there in October of the same year. The persecutions the little flock endured, and the progress of the cause notwithstanding, will be noticed in a future chapter. Pillawell, Lydbrook, Broad Oak, Little Birch, West Hide, Shecknal, Coppice Wood, Garroway Common, Yorkley, and other places, shared in the labours of the missionaries, and good was done thereat. At the Oaken Gates circuit's quarterly meeting of December, 1826, Pillawell and the other places in this mission appear to have been made into a separate circuit, with two travelling preachers, and the prospect of continued success.

During the connexional year of 1824—1825, Blaenavon mission

of Oaken Gates circuit prospered greatly, and was made into a separate circuit with two travelling preachers. Soon after the district meeting of 1825, the late Mr. Thomas Proctor was called out to travel in this new circuit, and its borders were considerably enlarged. About that time, or a little before, the preachers travelling therein visited Cwm* and the vicinity, under the celebrated Black Mountain, in the upper part of Herefordshire. The late excellent Mrs. Phillips gave them entertainment, and Messrs. John and William Gilbert countenanced their labours. But little had been done when Mr. Proctor was sent into that part of Herefordshire as a missionary, in the summer of 1825. The country is picturesque and beautiful, the soil mostly fertile, and the air salubrious; but the intellectual and moral state of the inhabitants did not resemble the country and the climate. Methodists and other Dissenters were little known, and evangelical clergymen were a rarity. Affecting ignorance, deplorable superstition, and daring impiety were generally prevalent, and vital godliness was understood but by few. Mr. Proctor began his truly apostolic labours in this district in a spirit of devotion worthy of the cause in which he was embarked. And his piety and zeal were tested to the utmost by the violent opposition he had to encounter, and the severe sufferings he had to endure. In the parish of Cloddock, in which Cwm is situated, Mr. Rogers, the vicar, delivered evangelical discourses, and was favourable to the Methodists. The Wesleyans had formerly preached in the village of Longtown, and for a time had a society there; but the society became extinct, and the preaching was withdrawn from the place. Still, impressions made under their ministry upon the minds of several were not wholly obliterated, and it is probable that there was more religious light in this parish than in most of the surrounding ones. Here Mr. Proctor and his brethren met with little or no opposition, a society was soon formed at Cwm, of which Mrs. Phillips, and Messrs. John and William Gilbert and

* *Cwm*, pronounced *cum*, is a Welsh word signifying a small valley or dingle.

others were members. Mrs. Phillips was a woman of superior intelligence and piety, and highly esteemed in the neighbourhood, and her intelligent sons and daughters all identified themselves with the cause, one of whom, Mr. Henry Phillips, is now a travelling preacher in the connexion. The Messrs. Gilbert were freeholders, and men of respectability and influence. Both of these became acceptable local preachers, and Mr. W. Gilbert, especially, laboured hard and successfully in extending the mission far and wide. Persons of this character imparted stability and weight to the society at Cwm, where Mrs. Phillips gave ground for a chapel, upon which a commodious sanctuary was speedily erected, and placed in easy circumstances, through the liberal assistance afforded by the inhabitants. At the Park, a few miles from this locality, lived a large and respectable family of the name of Lanwarne. Mr. Lanwarne, and all, or nearly all, his sons and daughters were brought to God under the ministry of Mr. Proctor and his coadjutors, and rendered eminent service to the infant cause. Some other families of influence and respectability countenanced Mr. Proctor's labours, and derived good from his preaching; but these were exceptions to the generality of their class, and the majority of the inhabitants regarded the missionaries with a mixture of hatred and superstitious dread. Impressed with the belief that they were the false prophets whose coming was foretold by our Saviour, many of the populace imagined they were doing God service by persecuting and ill-treating them. Several of the shop-keepers even refused to sell Mr. Proctor food, and he was therefore compelled to suffer hunger for days together. He was often pelted with rotten eggs, sludge, and other missiles by enraged mobs; stones sometimes struck his naked head while he was engaged in prayer, and his sufferings of various kinds almost surpass belief. Still he persevered in his labours, and met with marked success. When he could obtain no house for shelter, and no food for money, he frequently retired to the shade of some bush or tree for study and prayer, got what sustenance he could from the hedges, and in the evening went into some neighbouring

village to preach in the open air, often to endure insult and persecution in various forms. But his meekness and patience, his faith and love, his ardent prayers, his clear, pointed, and powerful preaching, were not exercised in vain. Under the blessing of God, the prejudices of many were thereby subdued, their minds enlightened, their consciences awakened, and their souls converted. Some of the most hardened and daring sinners were arrested in their impious career, and became humble and consistent disciples of the Saviour. Ere the close of the year 1825 several regular preaching places were obtained, and several societies formed. In the month of February, 1826, Mr. Proctor obtained an efficient colleague in the person of his countryman and friend, the late Mr. W. Towler, a young man of superior abilities and of ardent zeal. They were united in affection like Jonathan and David, and laboured together with much harmony and success. Mr. Towler had the more commanding appearance. was more of an orator than his friend, and encountered opposition with more daring courage; but Mr. Proctor's extraordinary meekness and devotion, his power of endurance, and his earnest and unctuous ministrations, rendered him not inferior on the whole to his popular colleague. Both were eminently devoted to the glorious work in which they were engaged, and both were abundantly successful. The number of conversions which were effected under their ministry was great, considering the thinness of the population and the circumstances under which they laboured. At Blaenavon circuit's quarterly meeting of March, 1826, the places in this mission were made into an independent station, under the name of Cwm circuit. Mr. Towler, of whom future mention will be made in this work, was removed at the Christmas following, but Mr. Proctor remained till bodily weakness compelled him to seek repose. In the beginning of October, 1827, he suffered much from internal weakness, but thought a little rest from labour would suffice to restore him. He therefore arranged with his circuit authorities respecting a visit to his friends in Yorkshire. But rest and his native air failed to accomplish the expected recovery. He was taken much worse,

and died in the month of November, in the 25th year of his age. His ministerial course was short, but it was a glorious one. His talents were respectable, his piety profound, his conduct most exemplary. For deep humility, quenchless love for the souls of men, and intimate communion with God, he may be fairly classed with Brainerd, Fletcher, and Bramwell. It is affecting to think that a young man of his character and of his physical strength should have been brought to the grave in a little more than two years, through the hardships, privations, and excessive toils he endured in Herefordshire. He fell a martyr to his work; but he accomplished a wondrous amount of good in a little time, and left a name fragrant as ointment poured forth. The remembrance of his excellences will long continue in the families by whom he was entertained, and the report of his exalted piety will descend to their posterity. He was the apostle of Primitive Methodism in Cwm circuit, of whose missionary operations we shall have to speak again in a future chapter. We may here just state that Mr. Gwillim, of the Waine, a man of property and intelligence, and son-in-law of Mr. Rogers, the vicar of Longtown, early became identified with the cause, and that his son, Mr. W. Gwillim, is now superintendent of Cwm circuit.

The work of God prospered greatly in Darlaston circuit in the year 1824, and the preachers there appear to have begun to preach in the large town of Birmingham sometime in that year. In the journal of Mr. J. Moss, published in the connexional magazine, we find the following,—"Sunday, September 5th, I preached at Birmingham, in the street, to a large and well-behaved congregation. The word of the Lord entered many of their hearts, and good was done. This is a mission: we have not preached here long, but we have nearly 40 members in society, and there is a prospect of much good being done. We preach in two or three different parts of the town on Sundays, and we have many houses opened for preaching and prayer-meetings on work days. There are many thousands in this large town who live without God. Oh! that we may be made useful in saving many of them."

In the same journal we find the following notice of this town, under date of March 6th, 1825,—"In the afternoon I led a lovefeast at Birmingham. The power of God was present; and after the people had spoken awhile, some cried out, 'What must we do to be saved?' We immediately began to pray with them, and four were enabled to rejoice in the pardoning love of God. I preached at night, and we had another shaking among the people. The work of God is going on well. Here is a spacious field for labour; there is plenty of ploughing and sowing to be done in it. O may my heavenly Master sharpen my ploughshare afresh, that it may cut well. The seed already sown has begun to grow. O may the warm beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and the refreshing dews of the Holy Spirit ripen the rising grain. And may the Lord raise up more labourers for Christ's sake."

But the progress of Primitive Methodism in this large town does not appear to have equalled, for many years at least, the expectations expressed in the foregoing extracts. At the conference of 1828 we find it on the stations for the first time as a separate circuit, with only one preacher appointed to it, the late Mr. Thomas Nelson; and the members of society would hardly number 200. This was the last station which Mr. Thomas Nelson occupied as a travelling preacher. Failure of health, it is said, compelled him to locate. He was a man of superior abilities, and in the north of England, especially, he had been extensively useful. His regular ministry was not, however, of long continuance; he travelled only seven or eight years, three of which were in London. After his location, he resided at Rothwell, near Leeds, where he suffered much from asthma, and where he died triumphantly in the Lord, in February, 1848, aged fifty-one years.

Leicester circuit sent two missionaries into Oxfordshire in July, 1824. Writing from Witney, under date of December 27th, 1824, to the editor of the magazine, they say: "In the month of July last Leicester circuit sent William Allcock on a mission, leaving Divine providence to guide him to the most eligible locality. After reconnoitring the country he fixed his standard at Witney,

in Oxfordshire. In many of the adjoining villages he found great numbers of the inhabitants living in darkness, sin, and misery. Many of them had not heard a sermon for twenty, and some for thirty, years. To these outcasts he began to preach the gospel of Christ; but had to endure many hardships and privations, such as hunger and thirst, and sometimes he was not able to get a bed to rest upon after the toils of the day were over. The desert, however, begins to blossom as the rose. We have now large congregations who hear the gospel with great attention, and many of the vilest characters have been turned from the error of their ways. But the work appears as if but just beginning. Last Tuesday night while we were speaking in a house at Witney, two wicked men cried aloud for mercy; and on Christmas Day we had a very powerful lovefeast, when many were earnestly seeking salvation. At present, we have two travelling preachers labouring here, and we have 135 members, among whom are ten local preachers and exhorters. Many places are crying, 'Come over and help us.'"

The writers of the foregoing letter appear to have been Messrs. W. Allcock and B. Shimwell, the two missionaries labouring in the district, the initials of whose names are appended to the letter. In May, 1825, the late Mr. G. W. Bellham went to assist them at the first camp-meeting held in the county of Oxford. He thus describes his visit: "Three local preachers accompanied me, and the journey being long, we started on the Friday. We sang through the villages as we went, and preached at one village called Fenny Compton. While I was preaching a deist got up and addressed the people; but the gospel told better than his infidelity. We arrived at Witney on the Saturday, and were received as from the Lord. On Sunday morning we held a fellowship meeting at five o'clock. At eight we formed a procession, and advanced towards the camp-ground, about a mile and a half distant. The town was moved, and hundreds followed us. The enemy stirred up many of his subjects to oppose us. About forty horns were blowing at one time, and the noise was alarming. We entered a

large moor, where thousands were assembled. We had two waggons for two preaching stands; but our persecutors soon turned one of the waggons upside down. I never saw such determined opposition before, and it continued through the day. The Lord, however, was with us, and a glorious work broke out. Fifteen or sixteen persons were crying for mercy at one time, and many were saved. On the following morning, Monday, May 23rd, a brother stood up in the Market-place, at Witney, and preached, when we were pelted with almost everything available, but chiefly with eggs."

The missionaries having now special assistance, it was deemed prudent to avail themselves of it for the benefit of the city of Oxford. The following account by Mr. Bellham will not convey an exalted idea of the state of morals and religion in that celebrated city at the time specified. "We thought we would go to Oxford in the evening (the evening of May 23rd) and storm the city. We did so, and I stood up against the walls of the city prison in order to preach. The service commenced in an orderly manner, and a great company assembled to hear the word of God; but the 'gownsmen' came with eggs in their handkerchiefs, and began to pelt us with them. One egg struck me on the face, another on one arm. One person came to pull me down from the chair, when a citizen threatened that if he touched me he should receive his fist in his face. The gownsman, however, would have a pull at me, and the citizen unhappily fulfilled his threat. This caused a cry of 'City, city!' 'Gown, gown!' and such a riot ensued as I never witnessed before. The gownsmen, however, were the most culpable, for they began the uproar. We were so besmeared with eggs and filth, that we took a wisp of straw to a pump and cleaned ourselves as well as we could. I was cut by a stone thrown at my neck, and I acknowledged the honour of suffering for the truth's sake. A young gentleman afterwards led me to a respectable house, where I found my five companions. The gentleman, his lady, and son were all pious,—I believe connected with the Baptists; and they treated us in the kindest manner, and provided us with food and beds."



Such was the first visit of the Primitive Methodists to the far-famed city of Oxford. No permanent society was established there till several years afterwards. At Witney, however, and at many of the villages around, the infant cause maintained its ground. We find Witney at the head of a circuit in the minutes of conference for 1826, the late Mr. John Hallam being stationed to it. He travelled in the circuit with great acceptability for the two following years; and his intelligent and unctuous preaching, his extensive pastoral visiting, his prudence, his self-denial, and his vigorous piety greatly contributed to the establishment of the persecuted societies.

The Norfolk part of Nottingham district appears to have made encouraging progress during the period under consideration. Mr. W. G. Bellham was appointed to Lynn circuit by the conference of 1825. It was then feeble, through the division previously mentioned, but during his two years residence there it rose out of its difficulties, and a new chapel was erected in the town. The circuit was then of great extent, but Mr. Bellham had not been many weeks in it before he enlarged its borders. On Sunday, July 24th, 1825, he attended a camp-meeting near Swaffham, at the close of which he announced where the travelling preachers would officiate during the week; adding, "I have no preaching appointment on Wednesday evening, whither shall I go?" A person of the name of Daniel Banham cried out, "Come to Litcham," to which Mr. Bellham consented. Litcham is a large, well-built village, formerly a market-town, about twenty miles south of Lynn. On the appointed day, Wednesday, July 27th, 1825, Mr. Bellham entered it for the first time, and found Daniel Banham waiting in the street to give him a hearty welcome. Mr. Bellham and he went round the village to invite the people to come to hear the word of life. Mr. B. then mounted a chair near the stocks, and began to sing a hymn; and before he had finished it, a large congregation had assembled, and stood with becoming silence. He engaged in prayer, and found the throne of grace accessible through Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God helped his

infirmities; the door of mercy was opened in answer to his importunity, and Divine influence flowed upon the people. He arose from prayer with a heart deeply affected with a sense of the importance of his work, burning with love to God, and melted with compassion for the souls of his fellow-creatures. Another hymn was sung, and Mr. Bellham read for his text the solemn and momentous question, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" His congregation listened with deep attention to his solemn and earnest sermon. He finished his discourse with the following sentence,—"May your souls, the souls of your children, and my soul, find mercy of the Lord in that day;" to which many responded,—"The Lord grant it." Hitherto the service had proceeded without interruption, but while the last hymn was being sung, the clergyman, a lawyer, and a constable made their appearance, and rudely rushed through the congregation; the clergyman seized Mr. Bellham by the arm, and peremptorily said,—"I insist upon you being off. Begone about your business." The following dialogue then ensued:—

Mr. Bellham.—"I hope, sir, you will not disturb our religious devotions."

Clergyman.—"I will not allow it. Be off about your business."

Mr. Bellham.—"What harm are we doing, sir? we have been singing the praises of God, and praying to him, and I have been preaching his blessed word, and we are now going to sing and pray again, and then we shall go away."

Lawyer to the Clergyman.—"Make him leave off, sir. Where is his license?"

Clergyman to Mr. Bellham.—"Where is your license? Produce your license."

Mr. Bellham.—"Are you a magistrate, sir?"

Clergyman.—"No, but my father is."

Lawyer to Mr. Bellham.—"You are not a licensed preacher; if you are, shew your license."

Clergyman to Mr. Bellham.—"Come down, you stupid fellow."

Lawyer to the Clergyman.—"Make him leave off, a villain."

Mr. Bellham.—"I am neither a villain nor a stupid fellow; but I love all your souls, and I will pray for you."

Clergyman to Mr. Bellham.—"If you leave off, and go away, no one shall hurt you; but if you pray, I will charge the constable with you."

Mr. Bellham to the Clergyman.—"I must and will commend them to God and the word of his grace, unless you will pray."

As the clergyman declined, Mr. Bellham began to pour out his soul in prayer with an unction and fervour which astonished the congregation, though the constable kept shaking him, and ordering him to "leave off."

When the prayer was concluded, Mr. Bellham thanked the people for their good behaviour, and began to exhort the clergyman and lawyer to behave better for the future, when the clergyman said to the constable, "Take him away." The constable accordingly apprehended Mr. Bellham, saying, "You are my prisoner, sir." Mr. Bellham replied, in his easy characteristic manner, "Well, that is a bad job; but I can't help it now." And as he was led through the street to a public-house, he sang a hymn with grateful joy. The whole village was raised by the occurrence, and many rushed into the room in which Mr. Bellham was placed. The constable ordered them all out, and then said to Mr. Bellham, "I am very sorry for you, but if you will let me pass you out of the parish all will be well." Mr. Bellham replied, "That would be no credit to the people whose preacher I am. Under what Act have you taken me up?" The constable answered, "The parson told me to take you up, and the lawyer said he was right." "If your parson knows no more about the gospel," said Mr. Bellham, "than your lawyer does about the law, it is time for us, as a people, to come to Litcham." The clergyman and the lawyer soon after visited Mr. Bellham, and, probably beginning to doubt the legality of their proceedings, used various arguments and means to persuade him to go quietly away. But Mr. Bellham was too shrewd a man not to perceive what construction would be put

upon such an act, and what advantage would be taken of it, if he did as he was requested, and he therefore resolved to stand up for his privileges as an Englishman, and not to be sent away till properly discharged by a magistrate. The lawyer was enraged and swore, for which Mr. Bellham mildly reproved him, and he went away, saying, "We will do your business in the morning." He afterwards returned to entreat Mr. Bellham to depart, but without effect, and left him again, saying, "You shall go to prison in the morning." After his departure, D. Banham brought Mr. Bellham some food, and the constable charged him with the care of Mr. Bellham, giving him his staff, and intimating that he would fetch the handcuffs. After the constable had gone, Mr. Bellham performed domestic worship with the landlady and her family. Next morning the constable took Mr. Bellham to Lexham Hall, before Colonel R——, a magistrate for the district. The clergyman who had given Mr. Bellham into custody went also, and had a long conversation with the colonel in private, during which Mr. Bellham was kept waiting in the servants' hall, where he embraced the opportunity of preaching Christ to the domestics present. When he and the constable went into the magistrate's room, he respectfully wished the magistrate and clergyman good morning, and the following dialogue took place:—

Magistrate to the Constable.—"What fellow have you got there?"

Constable.—"A Methodist preacher, sir."

Magistrate to Mr Bellham.—"What is your name?"

Mr. Bellham.—"W. G. Bellham, sir."

Magistrate.—"Where do you come from?"

Mr. Bellham.—"From Lynn, sir."

Magistrate.—"What have you been doing?"

Mr. Bellham.—"Telling the inhabitants of Litcham that Jesus died to save them; and he died for *you*, sir, and I am thankful to God for the opportunity of telling you that you may be saved *now*, through Jesus Christ."

Magistrate.—"Stop, stop! Mr. H., our clergyman here, could

have told the inhabitants of Litcham that, without you troubling yourself."

Mr. Bellham.—"It is no trouble, sir."

Magistrate.—"Well, well; what is to be done?"

Mr. Bellham.—"What Act am I taken up under?"

Magistrate.—"The Vagrant Act. You are a common vagrant."

Mr. Bellham.—"I did not do anything to obtain money."

Magistrate.—"I meant the Riot Act. You collected a great number of persons together, I suppose to make a riot, as it was late in the evening."

Mr. Bellham.—"If I am taken up under the Riot Act, I have no business here. Commit me to prison, and let me take my trial before more than one magistrate."

Magistrate.—"D— you. Be off out of my sight."

Mr. Bellham.—"It is wrong to swear, sir. Jesus Christ hath said, 'Swear not at all.'"

Magistrate.—"Then don't provoke me."

Mr. Bellham.—"I have no desire to provoke you, sir. I speak in the spirit of meekness. You know I have done no wrong. If I have, I am in your hands. I hope you will do the thing that is right."

Magistrate.—"You have done the thing that is wrong in preaching without your license."

Mr. Bellham.—"I am a licensed preacher, but have not my license with me."

Magistrate.—"Who granted you a license?"

Mr. Bellham.—"Squire Woodhouse, justice of the peace, at Osten, in Lincolnshire."

Magistrate.—"Do you know Squire Woodhouse?"

Mr. Bellham.—"Yes, sir; I have taken breakfast with him and his lady several times, and prayed with them, and he with me, and we have had some precious seasons together. I have heard him in his kitchen exhort sinners to repentance. He is a wise and pious man, and a blessing to his neighbours."

Magistrate.—"Well, well; but if you got your license in Lin-

colnshire, you must go and preach in Lincolnshire."

Mr. Bellham.—"Yes, sir, and anywhere else. God save the King."

Clergyman to the Magistrate.—"I have a license, sir, but I can not preach in any parish but my own, without leave of the minister of that parish."

Magistrate.—"Certainly not. And you [Mr. B.] must go and preach in Lincolnshire."

Mr. Bellham.—"Yes, sir, and anywhere else. Jesus Christ says, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Magistrate.—"I will grant you a license to preach in Norfolk."

Mr. Bellham.—"I thank you, sir, but I have a license to preach in Norfolk."

Magistrate.—"Go about your business."

Mr. Bellham.—"When I am properly discharged, sir."

Magistrate.—"Are you any trade?"

Mr. Bellham.—"I am a shipwright. I served seven years under Mr. B., of Lynn."

Magistrate.—"You are a fine fellow,—a shipwright, a parson, and a lawyer. Well, you may go about your business; I have no more to say to you."

Mr. Bellham to the Magistrate and Clergyman.—"Good morning, gentlemen."

Magistrate to Mr. Bellham.—"Good morning. Where are you going now?"

Mr. Bellham.—"To Castleacre to preach, and then to Westacre, and then to Lynn, sir."

Magistrate.—"I hope you will not come to Litcham any more; if you do, we must send you to the treadmill."

Mr. Bellham.—"We shall come again, sir; not to offend any one, but to do good in God's name."

Magistrate.—"You may go."

Clergyman to the Magistrate.—"Stop, sir, there is something for him to pay. Constable, what is it?"

Constable.—"Eight and ninepence, sir."

Clergyman to Mr. Bellham.—"Eight and ninepence. You will discharge that bill, and then you are at liberty."

Mr. Bellham.—"I am at liberty, sir; the magistrate has set me at liberty."

Magistrate to the Clergyman.—"Let the fellow go."

Clergyman.—"But who is to pay the eight and ninepence?"

Magistrate.—"Pay it yourself; bringing your fellows here."

Mr. Bellham.—"I'll pay it, if it is just and right. But I think the debt belongs to Mr. H."

Magistrate.—"Be off."

Mr. Bellham.—"Good morning, gentlemen."

Mr. Bellham and the clergyman left the room together, and Mr. Bellham said to him, "God forgive you, sir; I wish you well." But the reverend gentleman was too chagrined to reply.

It may not be improper to add that the missionaries continued to visit Litcham, and succeeded in erecting a chapel and establishing a society, from which two preachers have been called into the itinerancy, Messrs. James and Mark Warnes.

During the year 1824 other circuits in Norfolk made some advancement, and Yarmouth and Upwell became heads of new circuits. We have not found any early account of the introduction of Primitive Methodism into either of these places; but from two articles published in the connexional magazine we learn that Yarmouth was visited by the missionaries of the connexion about the beginning of the year 1823. The late Mr. S. Atterby, writing an account of the opening of Yarmouth chapel, under date of February 8th, 1830, says, "Seven years have elapsed since a society of Primitive Methodists was first formed in the populous town of Yarmouth. The commencement being small and feeble, the congregation worshipped in a house. But after the members began to multiply, a large room was obtained for preaching, and in it many precious souls obtained salvation." From a more recent account we learn that "the authorities of the infant society resolved, amidst much ridicule, to commence a Sabbath-school, and

succeeded in gathering together a few neglected little ones from the streets. These were taught in a small room hired for the purpose; and it was often predicted that this little school would become extinct, but by prudence and perseverance it was kept in existence, and in time became a flourishing institution."

At the conference of 1825 the circuits in Norfolk, with that of Cambridge, were formed into a new district, called Norwich district. The following year North Walsham was made into a circuit, with one travelling preacher. In the year 1828 Brandon, in Suffolk, was added to the number of circuits in Norwich district. We have not been able to obtain any information respecting the commencement of the cause in that circuit, but judge it probable that the first missionaries to Norfolk soon extended their labours into this part of Suffolk. At the conference of 1828 Norwich district employed 15 travelling preachers, and had 158 local preachers, 1998 members of society, and 22 chapels.

We must now glance again at the missionary operations of Hull circuit. Whilst Mr. Clowes was labouring in London, then under the care of Hull circuit, Mr. W. Turner, of Redruth, in Cornwall, urged him to send missionaries into that county. Mr. Turner was not then connected with any religious community, but was labouring to do good, and had several persons under his charge who had been benefited under his labours; and he was desirous of himself and his society being united with the Primitive Methodists. Satisfactory arrangements having been made, Mr. Clowes agreed to visit Redruth, where he arrived early in October, 1825. We subjoin a few extracts from his journal:—

"Sunday, October 9th, 1825, I led a class at seven o'clock in the morning. In the afternoon I preached in the open-air at Redruth; the congregation was large and well-behaved, and some of my hearers were convinced of their sinful nature and evil practices. In the evening I held a service in the house of Mr. Jenkin. The next day I spoke in a dwelling-house at Illogan-highway. I felt well while preaching; and in the prayer-meeting which followed persons were in distress about their souls, but not

many of them were converted, On Tuesday, 11th, I preached at St. Day's, and had a shaking time. The next night I exhorted at Redruth. On the following day I went to St. Austell, a distance of twenty-two miles, in the neighbourhood of which Mr. Stephenson had a few members who had belonged to Mr. O'Brien. These people had two chapels, one at St. Austell, and the other at the Downs; one was built of mud, and the other of stone and mud. As the people wished to be placed under our wing, I stated the principles of our discipline, of which they approved.

"On Sunday, October 16th, I preached in St. Austell chapel, but had not much freedom of soul. Next, I preached in the Downs' chapel, and had good liberty. I afterwards led a lovefeast at St. Austell, where the people spoke freely. On Monday evening I spoke again, when the power of God flowed in an unbroken stream. On Tuesday I opened Holmbush, where backsliders were very numerous. On the next evening I missioned Biscovay, and had good liberty. Here Captain Rich invited me to lodge at his house, and to make it my future home. I preached again at the Downs and Biscovay; but I felt the work of digging, to get a solid foundation, to be very hard.

"Sunday, October 23rd. In the morning I preached in the chapel at St. Austell Downs, and as I was describing the suffering of Christ, a thrill went through the people. In the afternoon I officiated at St. Austell, and felt divine assistance. I was afterwards requested to visit a lady of quality who was in distress about her soul; and whilst I talked to her and prayed for her, she cried for mercy, obtained liberty, and praised God aloud. The evening service was a lovefeast; the chapel was filled, and the experience of the speakers was simple, clear, and powerful. The next day I went to Redruth, and preached to a large congregation. On the 27th, I preached at the North Country house; many persons could not gain entrance, but they patiently stood around the doors, and the word preached cut like a two-edged sword. On the day following, I went to Twelve Heads, and preached in a house by the side of a hill. I was grieved at the imprudence

manifested by certain persons belonging to another community, as they hindered others from hearing, and prevented the conversion of sinners. At the close of the service I went to sleep at a house across the hill; but as it was closed, I had to proceed to Redruth, with a weary body and wet with perspiration. Such are some of the disappointments and toils of a missionary's life.

"Sunday, October 30th. In the morning I led a class at Redruth: in the afternoon I preached with freedom; and in the evening the crowd was so great, that it was with difficulty I could get into the place. One person was convicted, and retired in great distress, and then sent for me and others to go to pray with him. When we arrived we found him in bed, much dejected. When I began to talk to him he arose, and wandered about the house in the deepest agitation. I then began to sing, whereupon he fell upon his knees and cried aloud for mercy. We instantly joined him at the throne of grace, and God loosed the bonds of the captive exile, and let him go free. His wife perceiving what was done, kneeled upon the stairs; we cried to God in her behalf also, and he set her soul at liberty. A neighbour hearing the noise, ran into the house, and the power of the Highest arrested her also: she kneeled down to pray, and found salvation. Then a second person came into the house, and was convinced, and prayer was continued in her behalf; but I was necessitated to retire and leave the people, who were praying like wrestling Jacob.

"On Monday, October 31st, I preached in another part of Redruth, and some of the vilest of the vile were awakened to a sense of their danger. One woman, sixty-four years of age, was thrown into the greatest agony through her sins being set in battle array against her; but she was enabled to believe, and then she sang, 'Once I was blind, but now I see.' A young woman also was seized with the Divine power, and she cried vehemently to God to heal her backslidings. After pleading for some time, God answered her prayer, and made her happy. Next day, November 1st, I preached again at Redruth, and had freedom of soul. While visiting some families, one woman cried out with vehemence, 'Oh,

what a sinner I have been!' But God, who is rich in mercy, saved her, and her ecstasy was great. In the evening I was at St. Day, and a goodly company heard with attention, whilst I published the news of salvation."

We pass over numerous similar passages, and insert the closing account of Mr. Clowes's missionary labours in Cornwall. "I next preached in succession, and with increasing influence and success, at St. Blazey, St. Austell, Folgas, the Downes, Redruth, North Country House, Biscovay, and at other places. Conversions frequently occurred, and at the principal places the congregations increased rapidly. I frequently addressed large multitudes in the open air, and engaged largely in ministerial family visiting. On Monday, February 24th, 1826, I attended our preparatory quarterly meeting at Redruth, when the number of members in the mission was reported to be 235; and our financial affairs were good; so that we received nothing from Hull circuit's funds, either for salaries or for travelling expenses."

It is to be regretted that Mr. Clowes could not continue longer in Cornwall, as his labours there would have greatly strengthened and augmented the infant societies. His immediate successors, however, were eminently owned by God, and their labours crowned with abundant success.

In September, 1826, the late Mr. John Garner became superintendent of the Cornish mission, and he and his colleagues had the happiness of witnessing the conversion of many hundred souls. In the month of March, 1827, a great revival broke out at Redruth and in the neighbourhood, and thence extended itself to St. Austell and other places.

"Frequently no less than twenty persons joined our society in an evening," says Mr. Garner: "and during the ten months I have been at Redruth, more than six hundred have united with the Primitive Methodist connexion in Cornwall."

From the following account, furnished by Mr. Joseph Grieves, one of the early missionaries in Cornwall, it appears that a great proportion of the members in Cornwall belonged to the St. Austell part of the mission.

"Mr. W. Clowes was the first Primitive Methodist missionary to Cornwall. His labours were chiefly confined to Redruth and the vicinity; he paid a few visits to St. Austell and a few neighbouring places, but his head quarters were at Redruth, where he laid the foundation of a revival which broke out just after he had left the country. He was succeeded by Messrs. John Garner, W. Driffield, Richard Abey, and John Hewson. Mr. Hewson was the superintendent of the St. Austell mission, the other mentioned brethren were stationed at Redruth. In July, 1827, I was sent by the Hull circuit to labour with Mr. Hewson in the St. Austell mission, and the Lord prospered the work of our hands.

"On Sunday evening, July 22nd, whilst preaching in St. Austell chapel, the whole congregation seemed moved by the Holy Spirit; cries for mercy and shouts of glory drowned my voice; I stood upon the pulpit stairs and exhorted penitents to believe for present salvation. Numbers fell down in the pews; but how many were saved I cannot say. The converting work went through the mission, and we visited several new places with success. On the 'Wrestling Downs,' about a mile from St. Austell, we had a glorious work. This place derived its name from being the spot on which the annual wrestlings took place at the parish wakes. On a Sunday previous to one of those annual games a camp-meeting was held on the Downs, when fervent prayer was offered to God to stay the prevalence of vice, and abolish the Sabbath-desecrating custom, and one of the umpires of the games was arrested by the awakening Spirit of God, abandoned his evil practices and became a member of society. Other lovers of the games were abashed, and sought a more retired place on the opposite side of the town, where they could carry on their sports without molestation. A chapel was erected on the 'Wrestling Downs,' which has been the birth-place of many souls. Sinners were saved and societies formed at Mevagissey, Lostwithial, New Mills, St. Blazey, Polgooth, Tregenessey, Biscovay, Mendew, Kessel, and Tregrehain Mills, and at the last four mentioned places chapels were erected. During the same year,

1827, I opened St. Stephens, St. Columb, St. Minver, and Sticker. On January, 3rd, 1828, I opened Ladock; and formed a small society.

"The mission during the time I was in it paid all its demands, and at the September quarterly meeting of 1828 contained 457 members, and the home branch of Redruth circuit then contained 282 members." At the conference of 1828, Redruth was a circuit, having twelve travelling preachers stationed to it.

During Mr. Clowes' missionary labours in Cornwall, he visited Plymouth, in Devonshire, with a view to establish a mission in this large town. "As it had been arranged that I should visit the town of Plymouth," he says, "for the purpose of missioning it, I set off on Thursday, December 22nd, 1825; and on Sunday, the 25th, I preached three times in Plymouth. I did not feel much liberty, yet I trust good was done." Mr. Garner and his colleagues also visited this town, and a society was established, but we are not able to furnish any particulars of their success. The society never was strong, and soon became extinct. It is probable that the town did not receive all the labours and the attention which its importance demanded, and that this was one cause among others of the lack of great and permanent success. In a subsequent chapter we shall have to record a second attempt to establish Primitive Methodism in Plymouth, and the encouraging success thereof.

We must now turn to the north of England, and briefly chronicle the missionary efforts of Sunderland and Carlisle circuits, both of which opened a mission in Scotland,—one in Edinburgh, and the other in Glasgow. The commencement of the mission to Edinburgh shall be given in the words of Mr. Thomas Oliver, one of the two missionaries first sent to this city.

"Early in April, 1826, the Sunderland circuit appointed brother Clewer and myself to open a mission in Scotland. Our funds were low, and as travelling by coach was then expensive, we set out on foot, and walked all the way into Scotland, preaching at Morpeth, Alnwick, and Belford, as we proceeded. When we

arrived in Edinburgh, we felt the magnitude of our work, but in the fear of the Lord we entered upon it.

"While Mr. Clewer and I were going across the Grass Market, where the bodies of many of the Scottish Martyrs were burnt to ashes, we each felt a peculiar baptism of the Holy Spirit, and Mr. C. said 'this is the place where we must open our commission.' I consented.

"On the 13th April, 1826, we went in the fear of the Lord into the Grass Market to deliver our message of salvation. I went to a house to borrow a chair to stand upon, but was refused; I therefore mounted some flags for my pulpit near the middle of the Market-place, and we began to sing, 'Arise, O Zion,' &c. I preached from, 'Is all well, wherefore came this mad fellow to thee?' (2 Kings ix. 11.) The people seemed affected under the word. We sold two hymn books, and were invited to visit a sick man. Brother Clewer preached the Sunday evening following with great effect to a large congregation. Our way opened before us, a congregation was collected, sinners were converted, a society was formed, a room was taken on rent, and fitted up as a place of worship, and the Lord prospered our labours in it. We also adopted a course of visiting from house to house, in the Grass Market, Cowgate, and Westport, where we came in contact with many who were without a saving knowledge of the truth. We entered the abodes of poverty, affliction, and distress, and repeated the story of the cross, our hearts burning with the Saviour's love, and we often saw tears streaming from the eyes of the inmates. I find the following remarks in my journal, under date of April 10th, 1827. 'It is twelve months this day since we entered Edinburgh. Since then we have preached in most of the villages and towns around, within eight miles of the city, and have visited Dunfermline and its vicinity. The mission in the Grass Market has gained a good establishment. Since January 9th we have visited 715 families in the Grass Market, Cowgate, and Westport. Tracts have been distributed to each family, and great good has been done.'

"We commenced our second round of visiting this morning, after an absence of three months from the same streets. We were received with kindness, and we have reason to believe that by the blessing of God upon the tracts we left, and the advice we gave, good has been produced. Not succeeding in the towns and villages around, we gave special attention to family visiting in the city. We visited ten families a day, five days in the week. We took down the names of the families, their residences, the number of children they had, how many did not attend school who were capable of instruction, the occupation of the parents, whether they had a bible, whether they had employment, inquired what place of worship they attended, and left a religious tract with each family.

"In the Grass Market alone we thus visited 429 families; 113 of these were Irish, 289 children capable of instruction, belonging to those families, did not attend any school. About 200 heads of families were out of employment, there were upwards of seventy poor widows, and other destitute persons, and 123 families were without bibles.

"Our preaching place had been formerly employed as a weaving factory. It would hold 600 or 700 persons, and was well attended. The respectable people in the city responded to our application for pecuniary help, and we got the room fitted up with benches, free for the poor. The rent was £20 a year, and the fitting up cost £30. About £100 was subscribed by the respectable people in Edinburgh, to meet the expenditure, and assist the mission.

"Our labours, and the reports of this mission, excited attention amongst other churches to the great necessity of city and town missions throughout the country, and thereby contributed in some measure to the establishment of these important and beneficial institutions."

During the first year of the Edinburgh mission, Mr. N. West was sent to superintend it, and in the connexional magazine for May, 1827, there is an account from his pen of the operations and prospect of the mission similar to the foregoing by Mr. Oliver.

Mr. West was a man of more than ordinary physical and mental energy, and for several years had been extensively useful in the connexion, and his appointment to that important mission was doubtless regarded by many as likely to be productive of great good; and for a time his labours appeared to be highly beneficial. Some misunderstanding, however, arose between him and Sunderland circuit authorities, and at the conference of 1827, he was stationed for South Shields circuit. He refused to go thither, at the proper time, at least, and made a division in Edinburgh, taking possession of the preaching room, and drawing with him the largest portion of the society. Mr. John Bowes, a man of respectable abilities, and who had been very useful for a few years, was sent to Edinburgh to succeed Mr. West, but soon afterwards espoused his cause, and united with him in his efforts to raise another society. They and others laboured together for a time, and established preaching at several places in Scotland besides Edinburgh; but ere long they disagreed among themselves, and separated from each other. The design of this history, and the brevity we have resolved to maintain throughout, forbid a more lengthened account of those unhappy occurrences, or further reference to the persons who took the lead therein. The Primitive Methodist society in Edinburgh survived these serious calamities, and continues to this day, but has never attained that vigour and prosperity which it seemed likely to realize before those occurrences took place.

About three months after, Sunderland circuit sent two missionaries to Edinburgh, Carlisle circuit sent Mr. James Johnson as a missionary to Glasgow. He arrived in this populous city on July 13th, 1826, and soon began to preach with considerable effect in the open air, in several conspicuous places. Much good appears to have been done under his zealous labours, and the prospect of permanent success was cheering. In the month of October, about one hundred persons had united in church-fellowship, and a preaching room was obtained, capable of holding about seven hundred persons, and the expenses had been mostly met by the contributions of the members and the congregations. The mission in this

city was not so calamitous in its early history as that in Edinburgh, and in the course of two or three years became an independent station, or separate circuit, with two travelling preachers.

We have now to record the commencement of a mission under the direction of a general missionary committee. At the conference of 1825, what was called a "general missionary establishment" was formed, "to be managed by a general missionary committee," aided by auxiliary committees in different districts, and to be supported by money raised in all the circuits. Hitherto each circuit had pursued its own missionary labours according to its inclination or ability, which had doubtless tended to the rapid spread of the connexion through most parts of England; but as many of the circuits could no longer enlarge their borders without sending missionaries to a great distance, it was judged best to form a central committee of management, and it was hoped that by the contributions from the circuits in general, missions could be conducted on an extensive scale, without interfering with the missionary efforts of circuits which might be able to continue their operations, supported from their own resources.

The circumstances of the connexion at that time, however, rendered this well-intended regulation comparatively useless. We do not find more than one mission undertaken by the general missionary committee of that period, or placed under its care. Oaken Gates circuit had sent Mr. James Roles as a missionary into Pembrokeshire, the most western county of South Wales, and as the circuit was then considerably in debt, it was deemed prudent to transfer this new mission to the general missionary committee, which was immediately done. In the magazine for the month of November, 1825, the following account was published:—"Labours of the general missionary committee. Extract of a letter. Pembrokeshire, August 2nd, 1825. Dear brother Bourne,—I have the happiness to inform you that the work of God is beginning to break out in Pembrokeshire mission. We have opened twelve places, at most of which there appears to be a good prospect. We have formed one class, and I think we shall be

able to form seven or eight more the next time we go round. At Haverfordwest I have preached two Sundays, to very large congregations. The prospect there is very good, but we shall be in want of a preaching room. I wish you to send word whether we must take one. There are four or five houses opened for us to hold meetings in, but they will not hold one sixth part of the people that come to hear the preaching; so that we shall not have room to accommodate our congregations when the weather proves unfavourable. We are invited to ten or twelve more places. Our congregations are large, and the way opens wherever we go. Yours in the Lord, James Roles."

"This letter," says the editor, Mr. H. Bourne, "contains an account of the first-fruits of the labours of the general missionary committee of the Primitive Methodist connexion. The opening of their missionary labours the Lord has thus crowned with success."

But Mr. Roles was somewhat deceived by appearances, and did not make sufficient allowances for the love of novelty among a people living in a remote corner of the kingdom, where new efforts to do good and open air preaching were then of rare occurrence. A few months served to cool his ardour, and disappoint his sanguine expectations. The tide of popular feeling turned against him and his colleagues, and so gloomy became the prospects of the mission, that the general missionary committee determined to relinquish it as not being providential, and to remove the three missionaries then on the ground. But at the earnest request of one or more friends, the committee soon afterwards decided to send one preacher to labour in that extensive mission, the writer or writers of the request for one, having promised to pay his salary. A young man between eighteen and nineteen years of age was accordingly sent in July, 1826. A hazardous step for the committee to take, which nothing but lack of experienced preachers could justify. It is due to the committee to say that several of its members, when they saw the youthful appearance of the preacher, expressed their doubts as to his suitability for the station; but Mr. James Bourne strongly maintained opposite views. The

hardships, toils, and privations of the youthful missionary were neither few nor small; but through the blessing of God on his persevering labours, the ruined mission revived, became self-sustained, and ere he removed from the country in 1828, was made into Haverfordwest circuit, with a cheering prospect of continued and enlarged prosperity. In the stations of the preachers for 1827, W. Braithwaite is said to be under the direction of the general missionary committee, but we have not been able to find any record of his labours.

Notwithstanding the missionary efforts we have recorded in this chapter, the period to which it refers was one of trial and declension to the connexion in general. The number of members reported at the conference of 1824, was 33,507. At the following conference 33,582 were reported, being an increase of only seventy-five for the year. The two next following conferences, namely, those of 1826 and 1827, did not publish any number. At the conference of 1828, the number reported was 31,610, being 1897 fewer than were reported at the conference of 1824, four years before! It is no marvel that this declension should have been an occasion of deep and painful solicitude to the connexion's best friends. It brought upon Mr. Hugh Bourne a flood of sorrow, by which he was well nigh overwhelmed, and appears to have shaken his confidence in the continuance of the connexion. His doubts on this subject were gravely expressed to the late Mr. W. G. Bellham, when Mr. Bourne accompanied him to a district meeting at Fakenham, in the spring of 1826. And though Mr. Bourne's temperament would render him liable to look at the state of things in the most unfavourable light, he was not alone in his apprehensions of the probable dissolution of the community; many others who felt interested in its welfare shared more or less in these painful doubts. But at this distance of time, when the declension can be viewed calmly and more clearly and comprehensively than during the period of its occurrence, thoughtful minds will not be surprised that it should have taken place. The extension and increase of the connexion had been amazingly rapid.

Societies arose in quick succession in most parts of England, and speedily became both self-sustained and self-governed. These were composed of members whose experience in church affairs was small, and whose views of ecclesiastical discipline were necessarily limited and imperfect. It is no wonder that when trials came, many of these young inexperienced societies should be greatly agitated, and suffer material declension in numbers. Two or three causes especially contributed to these evils. First, the too rapid increase of travelling preachers. The demands for missionaries was so great, that sufficient numbers possessing the requisite qualifications could not be obtained, and too little care was exercised in the selection. Unsuitable persons were thus introduced into the regular ministry, who proved to be a burden, and, in some instances, a curse rather than a blessing. The societies languished under their inefficient labours, and even once flourishing circuits became feeble. A second cause of the declension was, the introduction into the societies of some ambitious turbulent persons, who had been connected with various other communities. The connexion has never sought to foster divisions in other societies, nor to proselyte persons from other communities. It has aimed rather at preaching the gospel to the outcasts of society, and gathering the lost sheep into the fold of Christ. But in forming societies of those who had been brought to God through its missionary efforts, other persons occasionally crept in of a questionable character. Disappointed in their ambitious schemes in older communities, they sought admission into less experienced societies, and there readily acquired influence and authority, which they exercised to the great detriment of the infant churches. Dissensions and disruptions were the fearful results, and many prosperous churches were nearly ruined by the despotism of a few ambitious men. Then, thirdly, the period to which this chapter relates, was one of great commercial distress in the manufacturing districts. Thousands upon thousands were thrown out of employment, and suffered incredible hardships and privations. Mobs assembled in various places, and soldiers had to be called out to

quell them. These things naturally operated prejudicially among the infant societies in these districts. The number of preachers could not be maintained, the rent of rooms could not be raised, nor other expenses met as before. Hence, the relinquishment of preaching places, and the loss of poor and feeble societies. All these things considered, the marvel is not that the connexion suffered some declension after its rapid extension and increase, but that the declension was not more serious than it proved. The societies generally preserved their simplicity, zeal, and life, and came through the fiery trial greatly improved in experience, wisdom, and stability.

In this critical period, Mr. Hugh Bourne rendered eminent service to the connexion, which merits a grateful record in this place. His views, on the whole, were doubtless too gloomy, and the measures he advocated, perhaps, too severe; but his sagacity, his energy, and his determination were exercised for the connexion's benefit, and in a great measure contributed to its preservation and revival. In many of the new rules made at the conferences during the period in question his hand is apparent. Some of these rules were very stringent, but they tended both to purge the ministry of inefficient preachers, and to curb the despotic power of aspiring and unstable laymen. And, as far as Mr. Bourne's influence extended, these stringent rules were carried out without mitigation, and, generally at least, without partiality. Human infirmity was sometimes apparent in his enforcement of rigorous measures, and good men occasionally complained, and not without reason, of severe treatment; but on the whole, Mr. Bourne rendered great and distinguished service in this time of trial, and, under God, conferred lasting benefits upon the connexion. Here we close our observations respecting the declension experienced between the conference of 1825 and that of 1828. In the next chapter we shall have the more pleasing task of recording the revival and prosperity of the community.

CHAPTER XVI.

Shrewsbury Circuit's Mission at Bishop's Castle.—Brinkworth Circuit's Missions.—Berkshire Mission.—A Mission in Hampshire commenced by Mr. RUSSELL.—Newbury and other new places opened.—Two fresh Mission Stations selected.—Miss SMITH's success in the Hampshire Mission.—Mr. RUSSELL's brutal treatment at Wantage, Farringdon, Shrivenham, &c.—Great increase of members in Shefford Circuit.—Opening of Wallingford.—Chippenham Mission.—Motcombe Circuit's Mission.—Salisbury made a Circuit.—Redruth Circuit.—Penzance Mission.—St. Ives Mission.—St. Austell made a Circuit.—Pyworthy Mission.—Barnstable and Bideford Mission.—Exeter Mission.—Prosperity of Lynn Circuit.—Mr. J. POLE sent as a Missionary to Docking.—Prosperity of North Walsham Circuit.—Mr. R. KEY's extraordinary and successful Missionary labours.—Messrs. APPLEBY and TETLEY's Missionary labours at Bury St. Edmund's.—Irish Missions.—Norman Isles Mission.—Canadian Mission.—Annual increase of the Connexion.—Statistics at the Conference of 1833.

IN our last chapter we had to narrate some declension in the community, in this we shall have the pleasure of recording a revival, and considerable prosperity. We purpose to detail the progress of the connexion as far as we are able, for a period of five years, namely, from the conference of 1828 to that of 1833. This was a period of considerable missionary effort. We begin with the extension of the missionary work in England; and in the first place, as first in the order of time, with the mission of Shrewsbury circuit at Bishop's Castle. Bishop's Castle is an ancient town, formerly of more importance than at present, about twenty miles south-west of Shrewsbury. The missionaries of the connexion visited the place and neighbourhood soon after they began their missionary operations in Shrewsbury and the vicinity, and some societies were formed at several villages between these towns.

But their first efforts to establish a cause at Bishop's Castle were without success. The town had for generations been notorious for wickedness, cruelty, and hatred of the followers of Christ. Its immorality and vice procured for it the nickname of "little Sodom." The stupidity of the people in religious matters may be inferred from the saying of a pious clergyman who came to the parish, namely, "previously to my coming here I had to feed lambs, but now I have to drive asses." But evangelical Dissenters could hardly use these terms with propriety; the inhabitants would not submit either to be *driven* or *led* by them, but chose rather to *drive them* from the town with insults and violence. The first Primitive Methodist missionaries were insulted, abused, and even stoned from the place. A pious clergyman of another parish, a great friend to the missionaries, who sometimes preached for them, and permitted them to preach in his kitchen, volunteered on one occasion to accompany one of them to this wicked and persecuting town; but a furious mob stoned both the clergyman and the missionary, and drove them away.

Another attempt, however, was made on Sunday, August 10th, 1828. Mr. Richard Ward was preaching at some villages not many miles distant during the preceding week, and engaged the societies to unite in earnest prayer for the Divine blessing on his intended visit to the town on the Sabbath. On the day appointed, he and Mr. Thomas Evans, a local preacher in the circuit, went in the name of the Lord to proclaim the gracious tidings of salvation to the sinners of this notorious town. After passing through several streets in search of a suitable place in which to preach, they agreed to solicit the bailiff to give them permission to preach in the market-hall, but they met with a denial in peremptory and uncourteous language. Some of the people also insulted them as they passed through the streets. They resolved, however, to hold a religious service if possible, and stood up for the purpose against the door of an old thatched cottage in front of the castle green. When they began to sing a few aged women and some children soon surrounded them, and they were allowed to finish the hymn

and offer prayer without interruption. While singing a second hymn a motley assembly gathered before them; though it was the Lord's-day, some carried scythes, some sickles, some bundles of various colours and sizes, and others stood with great sticks in their hands and pipes in their mouths. When the hymn was sung Mr. Ward began to preach, but some of the baser sort threw stones, knocked off the hats of the peaceable hearers, and strove to get to the preachers. They were, however, terrified by a great fighter who stood in the congregation, wishful to hear the sermon. He, seeing the design of the persecutors, swore aloud that if any of them touched the missionaries he would knock them down. This earnest threat intimidated the disturbers, and they drew back. Some of them, however, got behind the cottage, and thence tossed stones over it, which fell upon the heads of some of the congregation. A rough-looking man, without hat, struck the attention of Mr. Ward, through his singular movements, frequently withdrawing from the congregation, and as frequently returning. He, however, had no intention of creating a disturbance; the sword of the Spirit had pierced his heart, and, smarting from a wounded conscience, he sought relief by retiring from the preaching; but his attempt was unsuccessful; he could find no comfort till he came to Christ for mercy. The noted pugilist was also convinced of sin under the same sermon, and both these men afterwards became members of the society. When this service was over, the preachers announced their intention of preaching there again in the evening. A woman, with tears in her eyes, offered her house for their accommodation; but the mob swore that if the service should be held therein, they would either unroof it or burn it down, and the preachers deemed it best to preach again in the open air. They did so, and to a large congregation. But the "mixed multitude" presented a singular scene, and gave expression to widely different emotions. Some wept aloud on account of their sins; others mocked; some uttered profane oaths, and several threw stones at the preachers and their friends. When the service was over, the ungodly stoned the preachers, and three

friends who had accompanied them out of the place. The roads had recently been repaired, and stones were plentiful. They were freely used, and the preachers and their friends were in danger of being seriously injured. To avoid this, they got over the hedge into a pasture, and proceeded to a distance from the road. The mob followed: but when they had thrown all the stones they had brought over the hedge with them, they contented themselves with hissing, groaning, and yelling at the helpless few, who were happy to escape with nothing worse.

The following Sunday found Mr. Ward and his friends occupying the same place again. They were favoured with several hundred hearers in the afternoon service, and met with little interruption. At the close, they were invited to the house of a person of the name of Pugh, and were grateful to accept of the invitation, that they might obtain some repose till the evening service. Several hundred persons again assembled at the appointed hour, and though some of the mob threw a few stones, no injury was inflicted, and the service closed somewhat peacefully.

Mr. Ward visited the town again on the 24th of the same month, and held two religious services, as on the preceding Sabbaths. The congregations were larger than on the former occasions, and many of the people listened to the preached word with serious attention. Mr. Ward commended them for their conduct, and expressed a hope that they would always be peaceable and orderly in future. At the conclusion of the service, he received many friendly greetings, and several persons of respectability invited him to pay them a visit when he came next. No more open persecution of any moment befel the missionaries here; several persons obtained spiritual good under their ministrations, and a society of devout souls was ere long organised. Among these were the two men before named, Mr. Pugh, who first invited the preachers to his house, and his wife, two of his sons, and some of his daughters, and he granted the use of one of his houses for the preaching of the gospel. Both he and his two sons afterwards became local preachers. They were respectable tradesmen, and

had been formerly employed by the clergyman of the town, a gentleman of wealth, and a magistrate, but unhappily unacquainted with evangelical religion, and a bitter enemy to dissent. Mr. Pugh and his sons had to sacrifice his patronage and support for their conscientious union with the people through whose ministry they had been brought to the Saviour. It is mournful to add that this bigoted clergyman soon afterwards was taken ill while in his carriage on his way to a ball, and returned home; but on finding himself relieved after reaching his residence, he entered his carriage a second time to mingle with the gay assembly, which had more attractions for him than the couch of the afflicted or the abodes of suffering. He, however, became worse again, was obliged to return home ere he reached the place of amusement, and in a few hours expired! Mr. Pugh and his sons held on their way. One of the sons, Mr. John Pugh, became a pious and devoted travelling preacher, but having been put into a damp bed, he suffered so fearfully that he was soon afterwards brought to the grave, and his pious course thus quickly ended. He died, however, in the faith and hope of the gospel, and not under melancholy circumstances similar to those under which his former clerical employer departed hence. The society formed at Bishop's Castle continued to prosper, and in due time a convenient chapel was erected.

About the time that Mr. Ward visited Bishop's Castle, he and Mr. J. Richards conducted missionary operations in numerous villages and hamlets, with various results. At the village of Kempton, which Mr. Ward visited on August 21st, 1828, he was so violently opposed by a proud and haughty man who had great influence over the people, that they would neither give him nor sell him any food, and he was in danger of fainting, having been unable to obtain requisite refreshment for several days. He, however, resolved to preach to the people, if possible, and began to sing in the street. His ungodly opponent threatened to put him into the dungeon if he continued the service, but Mr. Ward gave him a shrewd reply, and disregarded his threat. Finding he could not prevail with the preacher, he then threatened the people that

if they stood to hear the sermon, he would inform his lordship, their employer, and get them turned out of their employment. Three of the hearers were brought under religious impressions, and united with the society at the neighbouring village of Clunton; in consequence of which, their haughty opponent succeeded in getting them deprived of their employment. His days of oppression, however, were numbered. A few months afterwards he fell into the river Severn in a state of intoxication, and was drowned!

At several villages the missionaries succeeded in forming small societies; the cause gradually gathered strength, and in 1832 Bishop's Castle became the head of a new circuit, with two travelling preachers and 135 members. The ensuing year was one of progress, despite of considerable opposition; the number of members reported to the conference of 1833 being 175. Further notices of this circuit will be found in succeeding chapters.

We must now narrate the progress and missionary labours of another new circuit—that of Brinkworth—also formed by Shrewsbury circuit, as mentioned in a foregoing chapter.

This young and vigorous circuit early took the management and responsibility of Stroud branch (as previously intimated,) in Gloucestershire, and made up all its financial deficiency; and being blessed with increasing prosperity, it resolved at the March quarterly meeting of 1829, to open a mission in the northern extremity of Wiltshire, and in the neighbouring portion of the county of Berks. A few persons from villages in these localities had attended the religious services at certain places within the limits of the circuit, and having been beneficially impressed, were wishful for the preachers to visit the villages where they resided. It was hoped by the circuit authorities that great good might be done by complying with their requests; and with the view of enlisting the sympathy, and engaging the prayers of the societies, in the behalf of the intended mission, a missionary meeting was held at Wootton Bassett, on Good Friday, 1829. A numerous assembly was convened, many zealous friends having come from

different parts of the circuit, and the speakers pleaded with characteristic warmth and energy the missionary cause. The God of missions was eminently present, the Divine glory overshadowed the crowded congregation, and many of the people were filled with faith and the Holy Ghost. All seemed to feel a deep and lively interest in the undertaking, and numbers solemnly engaged to aid it by their contributions and their prayers. The spirit which pervaded both speakers and hearers augured well for the success of the mission, and the shower of spiritual blessings then vouchsafed was regarded as evidence of the Divine approval. Mr. Ride, the superintendent preacher and one of his junior colleagues, were appointed to visit the localities intended to be the scene of missionary operations, and to report to the circuit authorities the prospect of success. They began their missionary labours on Monday, April 27th, 1829, by preaching in the open air at Wanborough, a populous village several miles north of Swindon. A large congregation attended, and the word preached appeared to produce deep and solemn impressions. The next day they visited Little Hinton, Church Hinton, Bishopstone, Idstone, and Ashbury, and made inquiries respecting the religious services held at each place, but the weather was too cold and stormy to permit them to preach in the open air. On Wednesday, 29th, they visited Crompton, Woolstone, Uffingham, Vernon, Longcut, Shrivenham, and Bourton, and made similar inquiries as at the places before named. Most of these places lie in the vale of Berkshire, and were found to be very deficient of evangelical preaching. There were no Wesleyans in the district, and very few Dissenters of any kind. At Ashbury, where a sermon had not been preached by any Dissenter for forty years, there was an evangelical clergyman, but he was the only one of his class within a circuit of many miles extent. Occasional preaching on week-nights by the Independents, was the only evangelical instruction which those numerous villages then received, except Ashbury. At Bourton, the missionaries sang through the village to collect a congregation, and then preached at the cross to a tolerably

attentive audience. This village was the first place in the county of Berks at which a sermon was preached by a Primitive Methodist preacher. On the following day Mr. Ride and his colleagues crossed over the Downs, into a corner of Wiltshire, and visited Aldbourne and Ramsbury, and made arrangements for preaching at each place the following day. On Friday, May 1st, they stood up at four o'clock in the afternoon under a large tree at Ramsbury, and one of them preached a plain and earnest sermon. A constable, and one or two more persons stood in consultation part of the time, but allowed the service to close without interruption, for which the preachers were thankful. They had been informed that the last preacher who had stood up there before was the venerable Dr. Coke, who was assaulted by a furious mob, by whom his gown was torn, and his person ill-treated, and they had reason to anticipate some molestation. A peaceable service, therefore, excited their gratitude and joy. As soon as this service was ended, they hastened to Aldbourne, where it had been announced for them to preach at seven in the evening. On arriving at the village, they found that a great excitement had been produced by the announcement of their preaching in the street. But they were not the only strangers who visited Aldbourne that evening, inviting the attention of the inhabitants. A company of merry-andrews arrived, and the crier was sent through the place to announce their performances at the Bell Inn. At seven o'clock, the missionaries repaired to a high stone cross, which stood in a wide open space near the centre of the village, and began to sing a hymn. The people generally flocked to their doors and to the corners of the streets, to look at the strangers and to listen to their singing. None but children, however, came near the preachers at first; adults stood at a distance, as if afraid or ashamed to draw nigh. When the hymn was finished, Mr. Ride poured out his soul in prayer, with a fervour which only few Christian ministers could equal, and his colleague solemnly and earnestly responded to his petitions. This excited the merriment of the children and others, whose loud bursts of laughter would

have distracted men of weaker nerves, and rendered them unable to continue their devotions; but Mr. Ride only prayed the more earnestly, and both he and his companion, in agony of soul, took hold of the Strong for strength to sustain them in the conflict upon which they were entering. On opening their eyes at the close of prayer, they were surprised to see themselves surrounded by several hundred persons; and while they sang the second hymn the concourse continued to increase. The intelligence respecting their intention to preach that evening at Aldbourne cross, had circulated throughout the vicinity, and people came flocking in from all the neighbourhood. By the time they had concluded singing the second hymn, a thousand persons or more had congregated to see and hear them. The novelty of the affair, no sermon having been preached there before within the memory of the oldest people of the place, had excited nearly all the inhabitants, and the merry-andrews at the Bell Inn were neglected, except by a few persons called "gentlemen." These being disappointed of their anticipated amusement, imagined it would afford capital sport to take the merry-andrews to the preaching service, to exhibit their accustomed performances among the people who were assembled to hear the humble and despised missionaries. They repaired immediately to the place, and made ready for commencement at a short distance from the congregation, as soon as preaching should begin. A person on horseback took his place in the centre, and the rest of the actors stood around him. The junior preacher announced his text, and with great seriousness proceeded to describe the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Immediately, the merry-andrews began to dance round the man on horseback, to play their musical instruments, and to go through their various performances in the best manner they were able. A large portion of the congregation immediately left the preacher, and hastened to witness the antics of the merry-andrews. He, however, made no observations respecting their performances, but kept to his subject, and preached with freedom and power on the solemn theme embodied in his text. Those who had been drawn off by the

attractions of the merry-andrews soon returned to the preaching, and the mountebanks were left alone with those who employed them. Disconcerted in their attempts to retain a portion of the congregation, the opponents determined on a bolder measure. The person on horseback rode up to the people who were listening to the sermon, and attempted to drive his horse through them, but happily failed. The mountebanks and the rest of their supporters moved directly behind the preacher, and, while close to him, made all the horrid din and uproar in their power. A parish officer, who ought to have found other employment, being the clerk of the church, assisted in increasing the uproar, by going round the congregation ringing a large bell, and engaging a great number of children to shout and scream. Amidst this disturbance the youthful preacher continued to proclaim the solemn truths of revelation, and with increased feeling and power. Supported by a divine hand, he felt no timidity, but regardless of danger or of personal ill-treatment, "lifted up his voice like a trumpet," and faithfully delivered his message. A son of Belial, hired for the purpose, ascended the cross behind him, in order to throw him down among the people, but his courage failed when about to execute his purpose. The preacher saw alarm depicted in the countenances of many of his hearers, several of whom rose on their tip-toes to look at what was going on behind him; yet he never turned his head, but continued his discourse. At length the merry-andrews were tired out, and withdrew; the parish clerk gave over ringing his bell, and went away; the children became quiet, and the sermon was concluded in peace. Mr. Ride afterwards gave a short exhortation, and the service terminated in an orderly manner. This was a memorable May-day to the preachers, and not less so to many of their hearers. Religious impressions were made upon scores of minds, and a noble beginning of a glorious work in the district was effected. This extraordinary service was a means of making the missionaries well known, and of preparing the way for them to visit many other villages and hamlets. It is worthy of record that while the

preachers were enduring this conflict at Aldbourne, many of their friends were assembled for prayer in their behalf near Wootten Bassett, and were so drawn out in fervent supplications that they continued in prayer for *many hours*. How greatly those fervent and united supplications contributed to the success of the important mission now undertaken, cannot be fully known in the present world. More prayer of this description in behalf of missionary efforts both at home and abroad, would doubtless be a means of obtaining large measures of divine influence, and thereby of rendering those efforts more abundantly successful in the conversion of sinners and the extension of the Saviour's kingdom.

But the opposition to the evangelical efforts of the missionaries at Aldbourne did not cease with the disturbance created at their first service. Mr. R. Jukes was the next preacher of the denomination who visited this place, and on several occasions he was opposed, and his services disturbed, by wicked and thoughtless men, who neither loved nor understood evangelical religion. On the 12th of May he preached to about a thousand persons, most of whom were wishful to listen with attention, but were disturbed by a person who played upon a tambourine for the purpose, and by four young farmers who rode up among them full speed in order to disperse them. On the 19th he preached there again to a great concourse, but was annoyed by the unseemly conduct of several farmers and tradesmen, who brought a jug and glass, and drank freely of intoxicating drink, and occasionally offered some to the preacher. A more serious contest awaited him on the 26th. A large assembly was convened as before, composed of persons of all ranks and ages, some with a view to hear the word of life, some to persecute, and some to defend the preacher. The clerk of the parish came into the congregation to cry a lost sheep, in order to disturb the service; other persons went to ring the church bells, with a view to drown the voice of the preacher, and rang them so earnestly as to do them considerable damage, the repairing of which cost several pounds. Others threw eggs at the preacher, to spoil his clothes. But the majority of the assembly were in his



favour, and not a few were seriously inquiring the way of salvation. A society was afterwards formed, and a barn obtained for a place of worship, which in time gave place to a chapel.

Mr. Jukes also visited Wanborough, Bishopstone, Ashbury, Bourton, Baydon, Osburn, Highworth, and other places, and preached there with more or less success. He began his labours on this mission on May 10th, 1829, by preaching at Bishopstone, to three or four hundred hearers, some of whom appeared to derive benefit from the truths he announced. He preached there again on the 17th, to a vastly larger congregation, who listened with becoming seriousness and with apparent profit. On the following Sabbath he preached to six or seven hundred persons, and was cheered by the presence of the Saviour. Though many of his hearers had been noted for wickedness, they were very attentive to his discourse, and gave indications of serious thoughts and impressions. A good society was established at this place in the course of a few months, and Mr. John Smith gave land for a chapel, and otherwise assisted in its erection.

At the neighbouring village of Ashbury, also, good was effected. Mr. Jukes, accompanied by a local preacher, first preached at this place on the 17th of May, 1829, when a good congregation surrounded him, and behaved civilly. On the two succeeding Sabbaths he preached there with much satisfaction, and on the latter day he remarked, "The Lord is at work in this place, and the Church minister says his curate is come." This was the evangelical clergyman before named, a gentleman of true catholicity of sentiment, and who had wisdom enough to discern that the zealous missionaries were his friends and assistants, rather than opponents deserving of persecution and abuse. His parishioners also shared more or less in his sentiments. On his next visit to the place, Mr. Jukes remarked, "The Lord is wonderfully opening the way; the people are not prejudiced against the word, which is a great thing on new ground."

At Osburn, Mr. Jukes received encouragement; large congregations attended his ministry, and appeared to "receive the word wi[illegible] of mind."

At Shrivenham, however, he met with no success. On the 13th of May, 1829, he preached there from "Repent ye, and be converted." Some of his hearers laughed, and others kept smoking their pipes, wholly unconcerned about the important truths he delivered. On the 22nd, he preached there again, when he was molested by two wicked men, who sought by various means to disturb the congregation. On the 4th of June he visited the place once more, and attempted to conduct a religious service, but the farmers had got an old ballad singer to sing songs, and the greatest part of the congregation united with him in his indevout practice. Others began to play at "backswording," and uttered horrid imprecations. There being no prospect of good at the place, he gave up his visits, and turned his attention to another village in its stead.

But Shrivenham was an exception to most of the villages which he had visited. In general, an encouraging prospect of success presented itself, and the circuit's June quarterly meeting appointed Mr. John Moore to assist Mr. Jukes in the mission. They laboured zealously in the work, preaching almost invariably in the open air, night after night, and undergoing much toil and numerous hardships and privations. At some places they had to meet with considerable persecution; but in the midst of all they were cheered with signs of good, and with the prospect of great ultimate success.

At the September quarterly meeting, Mr. Moore gave place to Mr. Thomas Russell, who was admirably adapted to the labour and toil which awaited him. Nights were getting cold when Mr. Russell arrived on this mission field, but the preaching was still conducted in the open air, except in a few solitary instances. The difficulty of obtaining houses to preach in was great. The inhabitants were mostly comprised in two classes,—the farmers, many of whom were very wealthy, and their agricultural labourers, whose wages only amounted to six or seven shillings per week. The grinding oppression and severe poverty which many of this class endured almost exceed belief. A large portion of these

"common people" heard the missionaries "gladly," and would cheerfully have given them permission to preach in their houses; but they were afraid of their haughty landlords or masters, many of whom threatened to turn them out of their dwellings, or out of their employments, if they gave such encouragement to the preachers of the new sect; and when houses could be obtained to preach in, it became necessary to get them licensed immediately, to prevent fines, and to protect the friends. The following instance will illustrate the caution the missionaries found it prudent to exercise, and the labours they underwent. Preaching much in the open air in the cold of the evening had greatly affected Mr. Russell, and caused him much pain and difficulty in breathing, attended with great hoarseness. It required much effort on his part to make himself heard by the people; and one night, while preaching in the open-air by starlight, at Church Lambourn, some boys made such a noise that he was obliged to exert himself to the utmost in order that the people might hear him. This caused him to vomit a quantity of blood, which alarmed some of the hearers, and excited the sympathy of one man, who ventured to invite him into his house. Mr. Russell then obtained liberty to hold a meeting in that house, and the oportunity was not to be neglected; and as a license must first be procured, Mr. Russell started off before daylight next morning to Salisbury, to procure the requisite license. It was a dreary journey of thirty miles, a large portion of which was over Salisbury plains, which he travelled on foot, with snow on the ground. He obtained the requisite license, and a few days afterwards held a meeting in the house. A woman was present at the meeting who had been impressed under Mr. Russell's preaching in the open air on the occasion just mentioned, and at the close of the service invited him to lodge at her house. Next morning while Mr. Russell was praying in the family, she cried for mercy, obtained deliverance from the burden of sin, and was made unutterably happy in the love of God. In her transport of joy she ran into the street, and told the people what the Lord had done for her soul, being wishful, like the woman of

Samaria, that her neighbours and acquaintance might also come to the Saviour. As she had previously been much opposed to religion, and had hindered her husband in his efforts to obtain salvation, her clear and striking conversion produced the greater excitement in the village, and led many to think more seriously about the nature and necessity of a change of heart. Her husband soon afterwards found the same blessing, and a society was formed in their house, which materially assisted the mission in its future operations.

But the first society which was formed in Berkshire, according to Mr. Russell, was one at Upper Lambourn. He preached in the open-air at this place, towards the end of September, 1829, when Mr. Thomas Legg requested him to pray with his aged mother. Several of the congregation followed Mr. Russell into his house, and as the number increased he began to sing a hymn. A shepherd coming in was greatly affected, fell on his knees, and cried for mercy. Others were similarly affected, and began to pray for salvation. The shepherd and a few more persons found peace in believing, and a society of seven members was formed that evening. A few other small societies were formed soon after, at different places, comprising in all forty-eight members at the December quarterly meeting. At this meeting Mr. Ride was appointed to succeed Mr. Jukes as superintendent of the mission, Mr. Jukes having to remove to another circuit. Messrs. Ride and Russell were blessed with strong constitutions capable of enduring much labour and suffering, and much of both was in reversion for them. Though in the depth of winter, preaching had to be conducted at some places in the open air, or not at all, as the people who were wishful to accommodate them in their houses durst not do so, for the reasons before mentioned. "The prospect," says Mr. Ride, "was very dark. Persecution prevailed mightily; I had never before known such violent persecution. The farmers in general were much opposed to Dissenters, and particularly to our community; and they threatened to turn the people out of work, and out of their houses, if they either went to hear us preach or

entertained us. We had, therefore, to preach out of doors in many places, and had frequently to suffer the lack of food and lodgings. Some of our preachers had to wander on the downs all night, after preaching, having nowhere to sleep." Though Messrs. Ride and Russell were not men to be intimidated with a little, they could not but fear lest this violent opposition should hinder the success of the mission upon which they were labouring, for whose prosperity they were intensely solicitous. They met for consultation in their difficulties in the beginning of February, 1830, and, after conversing for some time, they retired into a wood to pray. Their agony of mind was wellnigh overwhelming,—their travail of soul for the conversion of sinners was unutterable, and they poured out their supplications to God with an earnestness which, though the weather was very cold, there being snow upon the ground, caused them to sweat profusely. Their intercessions in behalf of Berkshire were long continued; but they found relief to their burdened souls, and ere they closed felt assured of success. They were not men of extensive learning, nor of extraordinary talents, but they were skilled in the practice of fervent agonising prayer; and abundantly were the spiritual blessings vouchsafed in answer to their earnest and believing supplications. The conflict which they endured in the solitary wood just mentioned had, doubtless, an intimate connection with the glorious work afterwards wrought in the county. It reminds us of similar agonising prayers offered to God by Brainerd, in behalf of the Indians committed to his charge, and of his subsequent success among them. From this period the zealous missionaries laboured with more courage, and the way began to open before them more fully. Several new places were visited successfully, among which was Shefford. Mr. Russell preached at this village in the afternoon of February 9th, the day after the memorable conflict in the wood. He asked permission of several families to stand at their doors while he delivered his message, but was denied the privilege. Finding a vacant place, he stood up under an old cottage wall and began to sing. Many of the people flocked out into the street to

see "the praying man," as they called him; among the rest were Mr. and Mrs. Wells, who were favourably impressed under the word preached. They invited Mr. Russell to make their house his home on his succeeding visits, and offered a vacant piece of land, their own property, for a preaching place. He thankfully complied with the invitation, and gladly availed himself of the offer. He preached there weekly for some time; Mrs. Wells obtained spiritual good, and, together with her husband, rendered eminent service to the infant cause. At her request, Mr. Wells consented to erect a house on the ground on which Mr. Russell preached, containing a large room for preaching and other religious services. The intelligence of the weekly preaching at Shefford was conveyed to neighbouring villages, and induced many to come from thence to hear the word of life. This led to invitations to visit other places, and thereby contributed to the extension of the mission. The small societies which had been formed also gathered strength, and the number of members had risen to 100 at the March quarterly meeting of 1830. That meeting appointed Miss E. Smith to assist Messrs. Ride and Russell in their missionary efforts, that they might be able to extend their labours to the places to which they were invited, and enlarge the borders of the mission.

Mr. Russell now began to visit fresh places, the first of which that claims our attention was Ramsbury. He visited this place for the first time on the 31st of March, 1830, and took his stand under the tree where Mr. Ride and his colleague had held a service in the spring of the preceding year. About three hundred persons assembled on the occasion, but the great majority came merely to annoy him and to prevent his sermon from being heard. Many of them rang sheep-bells, others blew horns, some beat tin cans, and not a few hooted, yelled, and screamed, and filled the air with horrid imprecations. Mr. Russell, however, preached with much calmness and self-possession to a few who stood near him and listened with attention. It was evident that the mob intended to do him some bodily injury; while he was preaching he heard

stones rattle in the tree over his head; and it is said, that at the close some of the fiercest of the mob proposed to throw him into the mill-pool close by. But a few who were aware of their design, and interested in Mr. Russell's welfare, contrived to get him into a house, and he effected his escape back-way. On the following Sunday morning, at seven o'clock, he preached at Ramsbury again in the open air to several hundred persons. About twenty young men sang wicked songs all the time he preached, in order to drown his voice, and shouted, "The church is the place where people ought to go," apparently supposing that singing profane songs to disturb Dissenting ministers, and going to church, were practices quite in harmony with each other. In a few days afterwards Mr. Russell went a third time to Ramsbury, and as he walked along the streets was quickly surrounded by a mob of all the baser sort of the inhabitants, who made a horrible din with their rough music and their yells and screams, resembling savages in their conduct more than civilised men. A Baptist minister's widow, with true womanly sympathy and kindness, and with heroic courage, rushed into the midst of these ruffians, cried shame upon them for their conduct, and took Mr. Russell to her house, where she gave him some refreshment, and encouraged him in his labours, saying, "You are like Paul and Silas at Philippi, but the Lord will stand by you." After a little repose, and praying with his christian friend, Mr. Russell again encountered the mob, and coming to a heap of stones he ascended it, and preached as well as he was able. Religious impressions appeared to be made upon the minds of a few, and about a dozen young men accompanied him a mile on the road when he left the village. With true apostolic simplicity Mr. Russell knelt down on the road and prayed with them at parting, when they were much affected, and promised him that they would begin to pray. The next preacher that visited the place was Miss Smith. A friend provided his barn for the occasion. The persecutors went as before in order to create disturbance and molest the worshippers, having their pockets laden with stones, eggs, and other missiles for the purpose. As they walked up an avenue

leading to the barn Miss Smith, dressed with characteristic neatness in the garb of a female Friend, was singing a hymn with great sweetness and pathos, and the ringleader of the mob was awe-struck and overpowered. Turning to his followers he said, with authority and determination, "None of you shall touch that woman," and they went away in confusion. The good impressions made at the former meetings were deepened at this, and other persons also were affected. About twenty became decided to lead a religious life, a society was formed, and Mr. John Alexander opened his carpenter's workshop for religious worship, which was forthwith licensed according to law. Here considerable good was done, many souls being brought to the knowledge of the truth.

One night while service was being conducted a gang of thieves was passing in order to commit depredations at a certain sheep-fold, and the leader of the gang, who for his crimes had spent about seven years in prison, stood to listen. Conviction seized his conscience, his heart was melted into penitence, he turned to the Lord in earnest, and became a champion in his cause. But, notwithstanding the conversion of this ringleader in wickedness, and the good received by many others, persecution continued to rage at Ramsbury for some time, For more than twelve months it was so serious that it was with difficulty that any meetings could be held there. A lovefeast, which had been intended for the place on the 31st of October, was held at Ewin's Hill instead, on account of the severe persecution at Ramsbury. Ewin's Hill, it may be observed, is about a mile and a half from Ramsbury, situated in the Downs, and a central place between Aldbourne, Ramsbury, Ogbourne, and Marlborough. Here was the residence of Mr. John Davies, who had been brought to God under the preaching of the missionaries at Aldbourne; and when persecution raged at the neighbouring places, the little flocks often met for shelter and for worship in his hospitable dwelling. The severe persecution which the society endured at Ramsbury, called forth the sympathy and prayers of the rest of the societies on the mission. Earnest and daily intercessions in behalf of the place ascended to God for

many months, and these fervent supplications were at length graciously answered. Many of the persecutors were brought to God, others were awe-struck and scattered; and the meetings were then held in peace, and the congregation and the society became very large.

Crooked Soly was another place at which Mr. Russell preached soon after he visited Ramsbury. Some friends from the latter place, and others, assisted him on the occasion. The first service was held on Saturday evening, April 17th, 1830, and proved very effective. Seven persons were then induced to begin to seek the Lord. One of them went home, and forbad the usual desecration of the Sabbath in his family, saying, "We will lead a new life." The next day he accompanied others several miles to hear Mr. Russell preach again, for which he was turned out of his house and deprived of his employment by his merciless and ungodly superiors! But the poor man, notwithstanding, held fast his integrity, and persevered in his christian course.

On the 18th of April Mr. Russell performed truly herculean labours, and with apostolic success. Early in the morning he attended a prayer-meeting at Eastgarston, in order to invoke the Divine blessing on the missionary efforts which he was about to make. Thence, accompanied by several friends to assist him in singing and prayer, he walked to Hungerford New Town, where he preached at nine o'clock. At eleven he spoke at Kintbury, where six persons became decided to begin a religious life. At one he preached to several hundred persons in a gravel pit, at Hoe Benham, and under his sermon Mr. Isaac Hedges, who has been a useful travelling preacher for many years, and sixteen others, were convinced of sin and turned to the Lord. At four o'clock Mr. Russell preached to near a thousand persons at Boxford, and at seven to about as many at Wickham. This was surely labour enough for one day, and the success realised was a sufficient recompense. During the week Mr. Russell visited other places, beginning at Peasemore, and ending at Weston, where William Hawkins turned to the Lord in penitence and faith. He was



soon after deprived of his employment, and turned out of his dwelling for entertaining the preachers. But he continued steadfast in the faith, and the Lord opened his way in temporal things. He was then an agricultural labourer, and had been earning six or seven shillings per week; but when Mr. Russell saw him fourteen years afterwards, he was occupying a large farm, and his family was grown up and in comfortable circumstances. "Ever since I was converted," he said to Mr. Russell, "God has favoured me with prosperity. I am now a trustee for a number of chapels, and I go far and near to preach the gospel." A society was formed at Weston, which soon amounted to 30 members.

But Chaddleworth was the place which acquired the greatest notoriety for its opposition to the missionaries, and the extraordinary measures employed to put a stop to their pious labours. The clergyman and the magistrate resident in the neighbourhood acted in concert, and devised such means to ensnare Mr. Russell as would have been more in harmony with the order of Jesuits than with the honesty and straightforwardness becoming a Christian minister and a justice of the peace. Mr. Russell, it was known, had sold some hymn books and magazines published by the connexion,—and the constable, a tenant of the magistrate, was deputed to purchase of him a few of these denominational publications. He accordingly met Mr. Russell as he entered the village on the 6th of May, 1830, and with great apparent kindness and politeness inquired, "How do you do?" Mr. Russell replied in a respectful manner, and the constable then asked whether he had any such books to dispose of as he had sold there the week before, when preaching at the place. Being answered in the affirmative, he expressed a wish to purchase a few. Mr. Russell, suspecting no covert design under these fair pretences, sold him ten pennyworth, when the constable threw off the mask, and inquired, "Have you a license?" Mr. Russell said he had not. The constable replied, "Then you must go with me before the magistrate." Mr. Russell, intent upon the errand upon which he had gone to the place, said, "I should like to preach first, as the



people will soon be assembling to hear me." Complaisant and polite as the constable had just before appeared, he now presented his staff, shook it in the preacher's face, and in a threatening tone said, "If you don't go, I will compel you." Under these circumstances Mr. Russell deemed it prudent to offer no resistance, and immediately accompanied him to the magistrate. On the way Mr. Russell talked to him seriously about his soul, and he appeared to feel some dislike to the business he had in hand, and said, "I am sorry, sir, to take this course, but I am compelled to do so, or I shall suffer loss. Several parish meetings have been held to contrive how to get you away, and as I live under the magistrate, I may lose my farm if I do not do as I am ordered in this case." He, however, did not long occupy the farm, to retain which he acted so questionable a part. He died suddenly soon afterwards in his farm yard. Whether there were ground to hope that he had repented of his sins, and found mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ, we are unable to record.

On Mr. Russell's arriving in front of the magistrate's hall, several ladies came to look at him, and as if unacquainted with the rules of good breeding, went away laughing. Then the clergyman came and asked Mr. Russell whether he knew Greek, or Latin, or Hebrew. To these interrogatories Mr. Russell deemed it sufficient to reply that he knew that sinners must be converted, or they could not be admitted into heaven, a statement which the clergyman treated with contempt. When the magistrate came, he made many inquiries respecting Mr. Russell's preaching, and when Mr. R. affirmed again, as he had done to the clergyman, that men must be born again, or they could not go to heaven, he replied, "that is enthusiasm; you are a fanatic." He then told Mr. Russell that he must promise to preach no more in that neighbourhood, or pay a fine of ten pounds. This, it was reported, was for having sold a few magazines without a hawker's license. Mr. Russell determined to do neither of the things required, and therefore the magistrate ordered him to be taken to Wantage. He was conducted thither the same evening, and the magistrate met him

there about eleven o'clock. The same conditions of release were offered again to him, which he rejected with as much firmness as before. He was then sentenced to three months hard labour and to jail allowance, and his mittimus was made out accordingly. He was given into the custody of the Wantage constable near midnight, and next morning, after the before-named conditions of release had been again tendered and rejected, he was sent to Abingdon house of correction. On arriving there, he was ordered like a vile criminal to strip before the doctor for examination. Being pronounced fit for the place, he was at once dressed in prison clothes. Even his Bible and his hymn-book were taken from him, and he was placed among felons. He found the labour of the mill to be hard; the iron handles made his hands both blister and bleed. For a few days his appetite could not relish the food provided, but hunger at length compelled him to eat it. In a fortnight, however, his health was greatly impaired, and his strength enfeebled; but the unfeeling medical attendant said, "Here he came to be punished, and here he must be punished." Mr. Russell was, therefore, again ordered to the wheel. Though seriously indisposed, he conversed much with the prisoners on divine things, and frequently prayed with them, and many of them were greatly affected, and shewed him much sympathy. Several ministers of the town manifested much brotherly kindness and catholicity of sentiment. Mr. Wilkins, Independent, Mr. Kershaw, Baptist, and Mr. Loutit, Wesleyan, interested themselves zealously in his behalf, and brought his case before the Religious Protection Society of London. The late John Wilks, Esq., with characteristic energy and ability, undertook at once to investigate the affair. A pious attorney, a lay preacher among the Independents, visited Mr. Russell in prison, and took notes of the case. The result was, Mr. Russell's speedy release.

On the 5th of June, a month after he had been committed to the jail, he was liberated, and took an affecting leave of the prisoners. A number of his brethren and friends met him at the prison gates, whence they sang to the Market-place, where Messrs.

Ride and Moore preached, and Mr. Russell delivered an address from Acts xxviii. 15, "Whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage." The same evening Mr. Russell was conveyed to the hospitable dwelling of Mr. W. Pinegar, at Marston Manor House, where he remained several days to recruit his strength. And at the June quarterly meeting of Brinkworth circuit, it was arranged for him to spend a month in the home part of the circuit, with a view to the entire recovery of his health. He met with a hearty welcome among his numerous friends at the different places he visited, and they had many times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Mr. Wilks, the secretary of the Religious Protection Society, also sent to request his presence in London, and remitted him money, through Mr. Kershaw, of Abingdon, to bear his expenses thither. Mr. Russell accordingly repaired to the metropolis, and had several interviews with Mr. Wilks. At last, Mr. Wilks asked Mr. Russell what he wished to be done. Mr. Russell replied, "All I wish is to go on preaching unmolested by the magistrate." Mr. Wilks rejoined, "Mr. Russell, your spirit is that of a Christian, and your wish shall be granted. Go on, sir, in your work, and we will protect you." At parting, Mr. Wilks kindly gave Mr. Russell three pounds to meet his expenses, and Mr. Russell bade him adieu with a grateful heart, and returned with fresh courage to prosecute his missionary work in Berkshire. The good work had progressed during his imprisonment, and a powerful camp-meeting, the first held in the county of Berks, was held on Bishopstone Down, near Ashdown Park, on Sunday, May 30th, 1830. Some thousands attended in the afternoon; much divine power attended the word preached, and great good was effected. At night, an excellent lovefeast was held at Bishopstone, and several persons labouring under a burden of sin, found peace in believing. At the June quarterly meeting the societies on the mission reported an increase of 40 members, and a fourth preacher was appointed to labour thereon.

On the 22nd of August, a camp-meeting was held at Shefford. The infant societies in the neighbouring villages came to the place

singing the praises of their God and Saviour; the preaching was attended with the unction of the Holy One, the praying services were effective, and at the lovefeast in the evening, held in the new house designed as a residence for the married missionary, there was an extraordinary manifestation of the Divine presence, and fifteen souls were liberated from the bondage of sin. The missionaries were also cheered by seeing the work of their hands crowned with success at various other places. The increase of members reported to the September quarterly meeting was 110, making 250 in all.

That meeting appointed a fifth preacher to assist on the mission, and arranged for Mr. Ride, the superintendent, to remove his family to Shefford, to the new habitation kindly erected by Mr. Wells. On the arrival of the preacher's family, the society at Shefford was found in considerable trouble and distress. Some malicious or misguided persons had informed the noble Marquis, who was lord of the manor, that the new house was built for riotous purposes, and that the peace of the neighbourhood was disturbed by the dreadful proceedings carried on in it. His lordship therefore visited the place, and saying that the house was built on a portion of his ground, threatened to have it pulled down. His tenants were also threatened with notices to quit their houses if they should attend the preaching of the missionaries, and with being deprived of the gifts usually bestowed at Christmas. The missionaries, however, had recourse to their usual means of obtaining relief; they united in fervent prayer to their Divine Master for His gracious interposition, and secured the co-operation of all the societies in this pious exercise, and their joint supplications were effectual and prevalent. The threatened overthrow of the mission establishment at Shefford was averted, and the work of the Lord continued to progress both there and at other places.

On the 19th of September, 1830, Mr. Russell succeeded in forming a society at Chaddleworth, the village where he had been apprehended as before narrated, and in spite of continued opposition, it prospered. Other places were visited successfully, and new

societies raised. The report of the mission to the December quarterly meeting stated, that there were then 300 members, fifty preaching places, ten local preachers, and five missionaries. During the ensuing quarter we find the record of societies being formed at Benham, Ashford Hill, Bradfield, Compton, Hampstead Norris, and other places.

In April, 1831, Mr. Russell was appointed to commence missionary operations in Hampshire. He and others had already preached with good effect at the village of Coomb, in this county, and had here received invitations to visit more distant places. With his mind oppressed with the burden of the work upon which he was entering, and with strong cries and supplications to the Lord for his help and blessing, he began to proclaim the vital truths of the gospel in the northern portions of Hampshire. On the 17th of the month he preached at Hurstbourn Tarrant, where no dissenters had been able to obtain a footing. The cry of many of the inhabitants was, "The Church and king; no Ranters here." And Mr. Russell would probably have been assaulted by some of the baser sort, had he not been accompanied by a well known pugilist from Coomb. Several near relatives of this man had obtained spiritual good under the ministry of Mr. Russell, and though himself had not been brought to the Saviour, he had formed an attachment to the missionary, and would undertake to protect him at Tarrant. His presence struck terror into the hearts of many who appeared to be as wild as a wild ass's colt. A few other persons listened with attention, and appeared to be favourably impressed. On the same day, Mr. Russell also preached at Little Down and Linkenholt, and at the latter place with encouraging success. Mr. Michael Osborne here obtained spiritual good, and a blessed work broke out in the respectable family with which he was connected, one of whom became a useful travelling preacher, and several others acceptable local preachers, and liberal supporters of the cause.

Mr. Russell likewise met with encouragement at Vernham Dean, where he preached the following evening, to a large

congregation, who listened with attention to the gospel message, some of whom appeared to be beneficially impressed, and a few treated him with kindness and hospitality; but, on the days immediately following, he passed through keen trials and sufferings.

On the 24th of April, he performed his usual amount of labour for a Sabbath. Early in the morning he preached at Ashmansworth, where his hearers conducted themselves with propriety, and no one offered to make any disturbance, except the constable! Some of the people wept under the word, and at the close of the service tendered their thanks, and requested another visit. At ten o'clock, he preached with good effect at Faccombe. At two, he addressed about 200 persons at Hurstbourn Tarrant, some of whom were serious, but the rest otherwise. At five, he preached at Little Down to a steady congregation; and at seven at Linkenholt, to the profit of the hearers. At the close he conducted a prayer-meeting, and then formed a society of four members. During the week he preached at Vernham Dean, Inkpen, East Woodhay, Highclere, and Burklere, and was favoured with some degree of success.

At the June quarterly meeting he presented a tolerably encouraging report, and Miss Smith was appointed to assist him in his enterprise. He had till now generally preached five or six times on the Sabbath, and each night in the week, and had frequently walked 100 miles weekly in order to accomplish his work; labour this, which would soon have worn down the strongest constitution, and impaired the most robust health. Yet, after Miss Smith's acceptable and useful assistance was procured, Mr. Russell did not very materially lessen his toilsome and exhausting labours. On July 6th, we find him walking sixteen miles, and preaching six times,—each time, we presume, in the open air! Several of the clergymen in Hampshire professed to be successors of the Apostles. We are not solicitous to claim in behalf of our humble missionary such a line of succession from the Apostles as that of which the gentlemen in question made their boast; but we opine that none of them so much resembled the Apostles as he in the *abundance of his labours.*

And Mr. Russell was favoured, too, with a large share of that kind of success which was most highly esteemed by the Apostles—that of bringing sinners in penitence and faith to Jesus Christ for pardon and salvation. It may be questioned, however, whether his excellent and devoted female colleague, "who laboured with him in the gospel," were not still more successful than he. The novelty of female preaching attracted crowds to hear her; and her modesty and good sense,—her clear views of evangelical truth,—her lucid statements,—and her solemn and pathetic appeals to the heart and conscience, under the Divine blessing, made deep impressions, and rendered her very useful among the peasantry in Hampshire. She received pressing invitations to visit places towards Winchester, Whitchurch, and Basingstoke; but more missionaries were requisite in order to comply with these invitations.

Mr. Russell, however, visited Newbury, in Berkshire, and many of the neighbouring villages. His efforts were rendered successful, and he formed a society in the town. An old building, in which Mr. Wesley had preached, was taken on rent, and fitted up for a preaching room. Many souls were brought to the Lord therein, and after it had become too small for the congregation, a commodious chapel was purchased by Mr. George Price and others. The society gradually obtained a good establishment in this town, which afterwards became the head of the circuit.

At the December quarterly meeting of 1831, the societies formed in the Berkshire and Hampshire missions, had acquired such solidity and strength that it was deemed prudent to make them into an independent station, and they were accordingly made into Shefford circuit, now called Newbury circuit. They had from the first been self-supporting, having, even in the midst of much persecution, met all the expense attendant on their establishment, and now they became self-governed. This new circuit contained 596 members, and two connexional chapels had already been erected, one at Benham, and the other at Peasemore. Seven travelling preachers were appointed to labour on the station, and

during the ensuing quarter an increase of 110 members was happily realised. This encouraged the preachers and office-bearers to employ additional labourers and to appoint two mission stations, the neighbourhoods of Mitcheldever and Basingstoke, in Hampshire, and of Farringdon in Berkshire. Miss Smith laboured with success in the former mission. Mr. Robert Langford, now a superannuated preacher, and a native of Hampshire, has kindly furnished us with the occasion of Miss Smith's visit to Mitcheldever. A few small religious societies, according to his account, had been formed at Mitcheldever and some neighbouring villages about the year 1828, "on the principle of no paid ministry." They laboured to spread the gospel in the surrounding hamlets, and met with a measure of success; but finding that they could not succeed in gaining a permanent establishment without a regular minister, Mr. Langford and his associates sent a request to the brethren labouring in the north of Hampshire for a missionary to be sent them. Miss E. Smith was accordingly deputed to visit them, and stay a month on trial. At the expiration of this period Mr. J. Ride visited Mitcheldever; a meeting was convened of the friends aforenamed, to whom Mr. Ride explained the rules and discipline of the Primitive Methodists, and their union with the connexion was agreed upon. This occurred in March, 1832, and Mitcheldever then became a branch of Shefford circuit. Miss Smith continued to labour there till June, when she was removed to Darlaston circuit, and two preachers were sent in her place; and "amidst hard toiling and much persecution the work gradually went on. The report of being false prophets, whoremongers, and adulterers, was raised against the missionaries, and the ignorant mobs believing the report, thought they did God service in maltreating them;" but the Lord sustained them, and crowned their labours with success.

Mr. Russell entered upon the Farringdon Mission in full expectation of severe persecution, in which he was not deceived. Before four o'clock in the morning of the third Sunday in April, 1832, he prepared for his journey to the scene of his intended

missionary operations. His mind was oppressed with the burden of the work before him, and the dread of persecution and suffering, but he was supported with a sense of the Divine approval and the hope of success. When he arrived at the summit of a hill about two miles from Wantage, he saw the town lying before him, and instantly a dread of what awaited him well-nigh overcame him. He met two men who knew him, and they advised him to return on account of the severe persecution which they expected he would have to encounter. He thanked them for their sympathy, but went forward on his journey. At nine o'clock he stood up in the market-place and began to sing a hymn. He next knelt down and prayed, and concluded without molestation. But ere he commenced preaching, a number of ruffians surrounded him, and he had not spoken long when a more violent company arrived and pushed him from his standing place, driving him before them like a beast. He heard some of them cry, "have him down Mill street!" And suspecting, perhaps properly, that they intended to throw him into the river which flows at the bottom of that street, he determined if possible to prevent being driven down it, and managed to keep in the market place. After being driven to and fro an hour or more, his inhuman persecutors paused, when Mr. Russell threw open his waistcoat, and in the true spirit of a martyr cried, "Lads! if the shedding of my heart's blood will contribute to your salvation, I am willing for it to be shed on these stones." At this moving statement, those who were nearest him, drew back a little, and seemed to relent; but a violent gang outside the throng pushed forward, and urged the rest to reaction. A respectable looking person, who Mr. R. afterwards learned was the chief constable, came to him and said, "If you will leave all will then be quiet." Mr. R. replied, "If I have broken the law, punish me according to the law, and not in this manner." The constable then withdrew without ever attempting to quell the lawless mob, who again assailed the solitary missionary with ruthless violence. At length the beadle came and seized Mr. Russell by the collar, and led him to the end of the town, and there left him. Mr. Russell's

strength was almost exhausted with the violent usage he had suffered in the market place; but determining if possible, to address those who had followed him thither, he stood upon the side of a hedge and preached as well as he was able. But his persecutors were not yet satisfied; they pelted him with stones, eggs, mud, and everything they could render available for the purpose. Even women, unmindful of the tenderness of their sex, joined in this cruel treatment; some of them took the dirt out of their patten rings to cast at the preacher! When Mr. Russell concluded the service, he was covered from head to foot with slime, mud, rotten eggs, and other kinds of filth; and his clothes were torn, and his flesh bruised. As soon as he got along by the side of a canal, he took off his clothes and washed them. Then putting them on, wet, "enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," he proceeded to Farringdon, where similar treatment befel him. When he came to a pool of water outside the town, he washed his clothes a second time, and then went five miles further to Shrivenham, where he was met with another violent reception. At a brook he cleansed himself a third time, and then proceeded to another village, where he preached in peace, except that a person threw a stone or or other hard material at him, which cut his lip. After this he walked six miles to Lambourn, to rest for the night. He had been on foot eighteen hours, had walked thirty-five miles, had preached four times, and gone through an amount of suffering such as none but a strong healthy man could have endured! Next day, however, he walked twenty miles to the other side of his mission, and during the week preached at several fresh places.

On the following Sabbath he visited Wantage and Farringdon again, as well as another place or two, when Farringdon was more violent than Wantage. Mr. Fox, of Farringdon, a respectable gentleman belonging to the society of Friends, thinking that his house and the neighbouring one of Mr. Reynolds, would awe the persecutors, kindly offered Mr. Russell the privilege of standing in front of those mansions. The next two Sabbaths, Mr. Russell had some peace; but on the third, the mob had recovered their courage,

and again became violent. The next time Mr. R. went, Mr. Fox met him, and said, "Friend Russell, dost thou find it in thy heart yet to come to Farringdon?" Mr. Russell assured him that he intended to persevere in his efforts. "Then," said Mr. Fox, "thou must not stand near our residence, for we cannot bear to see the hard usage thou hast to endure." Mr. Russell, therefore, repaired to his former standing place, and encountered a violent mob, as before, who pelted him and his friends with potatoes, eggs, and other missiles, till his spirits were at length broken, and he could not refrain from weeping. An inhabitant of the town said, "If I had a dog which had to suffer what that man endures, I would cut his head off, to put him out of his misery." Mr. Fox wrote to a clerical magistrate of his acquaintance in behalf of Mr. Russell; and this worthy replied, "the people have as much right to take the course they do, as the preacher has to preach in the streets!" With such gentlemen as he for magistrates, it was no wonder that an uneducated and irreligious populace should assail the humble messengers of Christ with maddened fury. The propriety of continuing to visit this town, under these circumstances, was seriously questioned by some of Mr. Russell's best and judicious friends; but he determined to persevere in spite of all the opposition he had to encounter, and the sufferings he had to endure. Thinking that five o'clock in the morning of a working day would be the best time for preaching at Farringdon, he decided upon preaching there at that hour, though he should have eight miles to walk thither for the purpose. He kept this resolution, and nobly persevered in his perilous enterprise. Good was done in the midst of the violent persecution, and he was cheered with the hope of ultimate success. Friends also were raised up at other places on the mission, who rendered liberal aid towards his support. So encouraging on the whole was the aspect of things at the June quarterly meeting of the circuit, that Mr. W. Wiltshire was appointed to assist Mr. Russell, that the borders of the mission might be enlarged. Their labours were crowned with success, several flourishing societies were established, and in the course of a

few years, Farringdon became the head of a good circuit. Wantage, however, must be excepted from the places at which societies were established. Persecution continued there with unabated violence. Some of the friends who accompanied one of the missionaries to the town suffered such severe bodily injury from the infuriated mob, that they never fully recovered from it. After a fair trial, the place was given up for a time. Several years afterwards, a second attempt was made to obtain an establishment, but in the midst of similar opposition and persecution as before, and not with much more success. About the beginning of 1852, a third effort was made to secure a footing in this town, and after encountering some opposition from a constable, a friend was found in the person of Mr. Hawkins, formerly of Newbury. He provided a good room for preaching, free of expense, and became the leader of the society which was happily formed therein.

While Messrs. Russell and Wiltshire were labouring successfully in Farringdon mission, Mr. J. Hurd was engaged in missionary efforts at Marlborough, in Wiltshire; and many other places were visited successfully by their brethren in the circuit. So greatly did the work extend and the societies multiply, that at the March quarterly meeting of 1833, Shefford circuit contained 1,010 members, being an increase for the year of somewhat above 300. The circuit had progressed in all directions, and it was now determined to conduct missionary operations at Wallingford and in the neighbourhood. Mr. Russell accordingly preached in that neat little town, and under his first sermon one of the vilest characters in the country was awakened to a sense of his perilous condition, and became a new creature in Christ Jesus. There Mr. Russell crossed the Thames into Oxfordshire, and preached at several villages with success. An encouraging beginning was made on this mission, and considerable good effected under the zealous labours of Mr. Russell; but his stay there was short, being removed at midsummer to Birmingham circuit. Miss Smith, his former colleague, being unable through failing health, to sustain any longer the arduous labours of a travelling preacher, consented



to merge her name in his; and after a happy union of a few short years, she died in peace, and went to her reward in the skies.

We must now record other missionary operations conducted by Brinkworth Circuit. The Berkshire Mission having proved abundantly successful, and having become an independent station, the mother circuit was encouraged to enter upon a fresh enterprise. At the June quarterly meeting of 1832, Messrs. Samuel Turner and James Baker were appointed to visit Chippenham, and other places south of Brinkworth. Some of these places had been visited without success by the first missionaries sent into Wiltshire, but it was hoped that this fresh attempt to establish an interest thereat would prove successful. The missionaries began their labours at Castle Coomb, on Saturday evening July 7th, and had a serious congregation, though they were somewhat annoyed by a few drunken men. At nine o'clock the next morning, Mr. Turner preached there again, when the word was attended with Divine power. Thence the two brethren proceeded to Chippenham, and attempted to hold a service in the market house, but were forbidden by the authority of a gentleman belonging to the corporation. Not knowing how far that gentleman's authority might extend, they deemed it prudent not to preach at that time, but announced their intention to preach to the people on the Tuesday night following. They then proceeded to Calne, a market town, about six miles distant, where Mr. Turner preached without molestation to a large and serious assembly, and was graciously favoured with Divine assistance. The next day, Mr. Turner waited upon a friendly magistrate to obtain a license for preaching, and to inquire into the authority with which the gentleman was invested who had forbidden him to preach in the market place at Chippenham. He next proceeded to that town, and called upon the gentleman in question to inquire into the reason why he forbade him to preach in the open-air there. The gentleman not very courteously replied, that the preaching of the missionaries had a tendency to collect mobs, and that as a member of the corporation he had a right to interfere, in order to prevent it, and should do so. Mr. Turner

argued the case with him, showed the beneficial effects of the preaching of the Gospel in the open-air, and respectfully expressed his determination not to relinquish the right. On the 11th of July, he went to the magistrate's meeting at Chippenham, and there met the gentlemen of the corporation. These gentlemen did not distinguish themselves either by courteous language or by sound argument. They said the preaching of the missionaries was a nuisance to the town, but would not give any explanation of this odd application of the term nuisance! and were offended that Mr. Turner should ask them any questions! The magistrates, however, defended his rights, and declared that as open-air preaching was no specified crime, they could not do anything to prevent it. In the evening of the same day, Mr. Turner preached in the market place to a large congregation, who listened attentively to the truths advanced, and some were "pricked in their hearts." On the following Sabbath he preached there again, to a very large assembly, without any oposition: and on the 22nd, he preached there twice to very attentive congregations, and was encouraged with the prospect of good. The services were thenceforth regular, and increased in interest and power. Much spiritual good was accomplished, the Friends' meeting-house was purchased, and a permanent interest established.

The neighbouring town of Calne also cheered the missionaries with the aspect of prosperity which it presented. Large and attentive congregations assembled in the open air, week after week, and deep and salutary impressions appeared to be made on many minds. A room was soon offered for preaching services; a society was formed; and at a lovefeast which Mr. Turner conducted there on December 9th, ten souls were brought into the liberty of the gospel.

At Castle Coomb, the missionaries met with violent persecution. On one occasion their lives appeared to be in danger, but they happily escaped without injury. Yet upon some of the vile sinners of this place some religious impressions were made.

At Marshfield, also, a small town about seven miles from Bath, the missionaries encountered much persecution. While Mr. Turner

was preaching there on the 30th of July, one person threw water upon him, another attempted to throw fire upon him, and a publican employed several young men to drive two carts through the congregation in order to disturb them. On the 9th of August Mr. Turner preached there again, when the publican before mentioned blew a trumpet near him most of the time he was preaching, and offered a gallon of beer to some young men to play music to drown the preacher's voice,—but they were wise enough to refuse the offer.

At most of the places which the missionaries visited more or less good was effected, and an encouraging number of conversions took place. Under date of December 10th, 1832, Mr. Turner says, "We now preach at thirteen places, three of which are market towns; the work of conversion is going on, and we have 100 members in society."

The good work thus encouragingly begun on this mission, continued to progress, and in less than three years Chippenham became the head of a circuit, containing 350 members, and employing three travelling preachers.

Passing from Brinkworth circuit to that of Motcombe, we must make a brief record of its missionary labours.

On August 2nd, 1830, one of its preachers visited Breamore, in the south-west portion of Hampshire, and preached under a tree to about one hundred persons, when religious impressions appear to have been made on some minds. This is the first account we find of Primitive Methodist missionary labours in the county of Hants, being several months prior to the missionary operations of Mr. Russell, recorded in a former part of this chapter. In the following month the same preacher visited the city of Winchester, and preached in one of the principal streets to a mixed congregation; some mocked him, whilst others listened to him with attention and interest. A request had been conveyed to Motcombe circuit's quarterly meeting for a preacher to be sent to this city, and it was thought that a promising opening for usefulness presented itself; but as Motcombe circuit was not able to support a missionary



there, no further attempts were then made to establish a cause in this city.

But several places in the neighbourhood of Salisbury, in Wiltshire, and other places more remote, were visited successfully by the missionaries of this circuit in the autumn of 1830, and a few small societies were formed. Under date of October 3rd, one of the preachers writes,—"The season of the year is past for preaching in the open air, and we find it difficult to get houses to preach in. But about thirty persons have united with us at different places, and the good work is prospering. At one place, where we almost despaired of succeeding, after much labour and prayer, a lady offered a house for our accommodation; we occupy it rent-free, and have a society of sixteen persons." The preachers from Motcombe circuit had, however, visited the ancient city of Salisbury three years before, having begun their missionary labours there in 1827. After some time, a dwelling house was lent by a friend for their religious services, and a small society of seven or eight members was formed. This house becoming too small, a large room was rented, in which many conversions were effected, and in which the society continued to prosper. And the good work extended to some of the neighbouring villages. In 1831 we find Salisbury at the head of a circuit, having two preachers stationed to it at the conference of that year. In 1833 it reported 250 members.

Proceeding from the south-west of England to the extremity of the west, we find Redruth circuit, in Cornwall, carrying on successful missions at Penzance, Newlyn, and St. Ives.

About the close of the year 1826, or in the spring of 1827, the late Mr. John Garner paid a visit to Penzance and Newlyn, preached at each place, and returned the same evening to Redruth. The late Mr. W. Teal, a young man of eminent piety and zeal, was soon after sent to Penzance and the neighbourhood, as a missionary. His labours were crowned with success. He raised a society of 20 members at Penzance, and one of about thirty at Newlyn. But his pious and useful course was only of short



duration; he caught cold at a camp-meeting, which brought on pulmonary consumption, and after lingering about two years he died triumphantly in the Lord. He was succeeded at Penzance by Mr. Joseph Grieves, to whom we are indebted for this information. In September, 1828, Mr. Grieves found about twenty members in Penzance, who then worshipped in a school-room in South Parade. Many sinners were brought to God in this room, and the congregations became too large to be accommodated; and a chapel in Queen street was therefore taken on rent.

At Newlyn, a great revival of religion took place; many of the vilest sinners in the neighbourhood were brought under its saving influence, and became new creatures in Christ Jesus. A striking reformation was accordingly witnessed in their morals,—several who had been wont to "steal, stole no more." A gentleman said to one of the members, "I am glad the Primitive Methodists have come to Newlyn, for I have no need now to be at the expense of paying men to watch my fish." A large room, capable of containing five or six hundred persons, was procured for purposes of worship, and was often crowded to excess.

Other places also were visited successfully; and at the March quarterly meeting of 1829, there were 130 members in the Penzance mission.

While Mr. Grieves was labouring on this mission he visited St. Ives, on the northern coast. His first visit was made on the 15th of July, 1829. On his journey, he was detained about three hours, waiting to cross the Hayle river. This time was mostly spent in earnest prayer to the God of missions, that a way might be opened at St. Ives, and that many souls might be saved. In the evening he stood on a large boat near the Quay, the most populous and wicked part of the town, and preached to several hundred persons, who listened with attention, and many of them were convinced of sin. The following week he preached there again, to a congregation supposed to contain not fewer than 2,000 persons. The unction of the Holy One attended the word, and numbers received religious impressions which were never after-



wards effaced. Large congregations continued to attend his preaching, and that of his colleague, Mr. Horsell, and a great revival of religion took place, which extended to the other religious communities in the town, and a striking reformation became apparent among the inhabitants generally. The missionaries met with much kindness and respect from all classes; a goodly number of those who were brought to God under their labours united with them in church fellowship, and in June 1830, the society numbered 136 members. A large chapel was speedily erected, towards which the inhabitants generously contributed, and a flourishing interest was established. In 1833 St. Ives became the head of a circuit, having two preachers stationed to it by the conference of that year.

The St. Austell part of Redruth circuit was made into a separate circuit at the conference of 1829. The late Mr. John Hewson was at that time the superintendent of St. Austell, and before his removal to Redruth he visited Pyworthy and other places in the north-western portion of Devonshire. A Mr. Oliver, eldest son of a respectable farmer and land-owner in that district, had sent to St. Austell requesting a preacher, and it was in compliance with his request that Mr. Hewson visited the place before mentioned. He met with a favourable reception, and was followed by other brethren. A good work began among the people, and Mr. W. Chubb, whose father was owner of the adjoining farm to that of Mr. Oliver, was brought to God, and became an acceptable and useful local preacher. In August, 1831, the Pyworthy mission contained eighty-six members.

Towards the end of the year 1830, Mr. W. Horsell was sent as a missionary by St. Austell circuit to Barnstaple and Bideford, neighbouring towns of Devonshire, twenty or thirty miles in a northerly direction from Pyworthy. He was successful in his efforts; sinners were brought to God; and societies were formed at several places. In February, 1831, there were sixty members in the mission,—and soon afterwards a greater number than this was found in Barnstaple alone.

In August, 1831, Mr. Joseph Grieves went as a missionary to the city of Exeter, in the south of Devonshire. A respectable person fitted up a room on his own premises for the accommodation of Mr. Grieves and his friends, in which Mr. Grieves preached with encouraging success. A society was formed, and the prospect of future usefulness was cheering. For some time afterwards this mission made some improvement, but it never became very strong or prosperous.

It is painful to add, that notwithstanding the labour and toil which several of the first and succeeding missionaries spent on the mission stations in this fine county, and the cheering prospects which for a time presented themselves, in some of them, a succession of calamities befel them all; and through the improper conduct of one of the preachers, the inefficiency of two or three more, the lack of sufficient connexional support, and of courage and perseverance under difficulties, the whole county was abandoned by the Primitive Methodist connexion! It is humiliating to record these facts, but truth and fidelity demand their insertion in these pages. It was certainly not honourable to the community, nor in harmony with the spirit of enterprise and perseverance which it has generally displayed, to relinquish all the mission stations which it had in the county, though several disasters had occurred on them. However, the labour, toil, and expense spent thereon were not altogether in vain. A few souls were brought to the Lord under the ministry of the missionaries, who died happy in communion with them; several acceptable and useful travelling preachers were raised up, who have rendered good service to the connexion, namely, Messrs. Chubb, Rooke, Grigg, Mules, &c., and the Wesleyan and Bible Christian communities largely shared in the fruits of the missionaries' labours on the before-named stations. It was well that these two denominations were able to collect into church fellowship the scattered remains of the societies unwisely relinquished by the Primitive Methodists.

In recording the progress and failure of the Devonshire missions,

we have omitted many particulars; amongst the rest, the efforts of St. Ives circuit to maintain one or more of them, after they had been nearly wrecked; but we judge we have inserted as much as will be acceptable or interesting to most readers. In recording the relinquishment of these missions in this place, we have, for the sake of connection, considerably anticipated the course of events, as the abandonment of them did not take place till several years after the conference of 1833, to which the present chapter extends. Towards the conclusion of this work we shall have the pleasure of recording the re-commencement of missionary efforts in Devonshire, under more favourable circumstances, and with more rational prospects of success than in the cases we have just narrated.

Turning to Herefordshire, another county in the west of England, we find Cwm circuit making very successful efforts within and beyond its borders. Within the five years to which this chapter refers, Mrs. Lea, of Yew Cottage, near Madley, and five of her children identified themselves with the infant cause. This highly respectable and pious family rendered eminent service to the community in various ways, and greatly contributed to the establishment and increase of the societies. They patiently bore the sneers and contempt of many in their own rank, cheerfully encountered persecution in different forms, and zealously laboured to spread evangelical truth and pure Christianity in many of the surrounding villages and hamlets. Several of the local preachers in this circuit also laboured zealously and extensively; most of the travelling preachers were laborious and useful; and the combined efforts of preachers and people, under the blessing of God, proved successful in the conversion of many sinners, and the formation of many new societies; so that at the conference of 1833 the circuit numbered 754 members, being an increase of several hundreds during the five years.

Turning from the west to the east of England, we find Lynn circuit prospering in an extraordinary manner, and conducting missionary operations with considerable success. At the con-

ference of 1828, this circuit reported only 327 members; at the conference of 1831, when the late zealous and useful John Smith was stationed to it, its number had risen to 536, a proof of considerable progress during the three years. But much greater prosperity awaited it. A great revival of religion took place in most parts of the circuit, and in March, 1832, it contained 770 members, being an increase of 234 for the year. Encouraged by this abundant prosperity the March quarterly meeting agreed to send the late Mr. James Pole to Docking, Burnham, Ringstead, and other neighbouring places in the north-western extremity of Norfolk. He commenced his missionary labours at Docking on the 11th of April, 1832, by preaching in the open air. A large congregation assembled to hear him, many persons were affected under the word, and at the close of the service he conducted a powerful prayer-meeting in a dwelling-house. The next morning he held a prayer-meeting, at which much of the power of the Holy Spirit was felt, and several persons began to pray for the pardon of their sins. On the same day he walked six miles to Burnham Market, where he preached in the open air. A number of persons surrounded him, but for a while appeared to be very careless and inattentive. Towards the close of the sermon, however, their attention became riveted, and they manifested a degree of seriousness.

On the following Sabbath, April 15th, he preached four times. He began at Hunstanton at nine o'clock in the morning, when the word went with power to many hearts. He then went two miles further to Ringstead, where he preached with effect to a large congregation. At two in the afternoon he discoursed with freedom at Thornham, and at night at Holme, where many sinners trembled under the word. During the week he preached at several places with good effect; sinners cried for mercy, and were directed to Christ for pardon and salvation.

On Sunday April 22nd, he preached at Sedgford, Heacham, and Docking. At the last named place he was favoured with a large congregation; and in a prayer-meeting held afterwards two

penitent sinners were brought into the liberty of the Gospel. On the following morning he conducted a prayer-meeting there. The house in which it was held was filled with people, and four other mourners were comforted. The same day he went to Snettisham, and was painfully exercised in mind on the way, fearing that he should have no success; but when he ascended the steps of the cross a large congregation gathered round him, to whom he was enabled to preach the Gospel "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;" all his hearers seemed affected, and several invited him to their houses. This was the beginning of a great work there. In the course of a few months a society of sixty members was established, and a chapel fitted up for worship, capable of accommodating 200 persons.

A good work also began at several other places on the mission, and on the 27th of May a powerful camp-meeting was held at Ingoldsthorpe, near Snettisham, where forty persons, it was judged, found peace through faith in Christ. One young man who went to mock the preachers and the people was speedily arrested by the Holy Spirit; he trembled under a sense of his guilt and danger, his knees smote one against another, and, unable to stand, he fell to the ground, and in deep distress of soul, cried to the Lord for mercy. He was pointed to the Lamb of God; and, confiding in the sacrifice of the cross for pardon and salvation, he found deliverance from his oppressive load of guilt, and went home rejoicing in the Lord. He soon afterwards became a class-leader and a local preacher. A great reformation was soon apparent among the new converts. Many who had formerly spent their Sabbaths in pleasure and amusement, or in drunkenness and other crimes, neglecting the ordinances of religion, and wholly disregarding the Divine authority, became devout observers of the Lord's day, attended Divine worship with holy delight, cultivated habits of sobriety and industry, and ornamented their professions by a consistent deportment.

On June 18th, 1832, Mr. Pole attended the circuit's quarterly meeting, and reported the state of the mission. He had been

labouring upon it about ten weeks; had usually preached four times on the sabbath, and six times in a week on work days; and had admitted into society about 120 persons. Encouraged by this success, another missionary was appointed to assist him; and at Michaelmas there were on the mission nine societies, fourteen classes, and 186 members. And the contributions had more than equalled the expenses. The circuit generally, too, continued to prosper; so much so, that at the conference of 1833, it reported 1170 members, being an increase of 400 for the year, and 843 for the preceding five years.

Turning eastward to North Walsham circuit, we meet with similar tokens of prosperity and of successful efforts. The district, which is now called East Dereham circuit, was selected for missionary operations. We are unable to record the exact period at which missionary efforts were commenced therein; but we learn from the journal of Mr. Robert Key, published in the Connexional magazine for 1835, that he preached at Lenwade, Swannington, Sparham, Cawston, East Tuddenham, Whitwell, Mattishall, and Hockering, in May, 1831. The journal in question is a record of the extraordinary power which attended the ministry of Mr. Key at the places just named, and at several others in the same district. Multitudes flocked to hear him, and night after night considerable numbers were awakened to a sense of their sin and danger, cried to the Lord in the bitterness of penitential grief, and found salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. This great work, as in many other cases where a revival of religion has begun among a people who have lived for some time in utter negligence of its momentous realities, was frequently attended with overpowering emotions, under which some persons fell to the ground. Whilst Mr. Key was speaking at East Tuddenham, in the evening of May 27th, 1831, from—"Time shall be no longer," he thought every person in the house trembled. "Some would have got out, but could not move; their strength left them, their guilt stared them in the face, they gave vent to the feelings of their wounded hearts, and a general cry

for mercy followed." On Sunday, June 5th, a powerful camp-meeting was held at North Tuddenham. The sermons and exhortations were short, pointed, and powerful, and the doctrine of a present salvation was enforced in each. Hundreds of the hearers trembled, and numbers fell to the ground, and called upon the Lord for mercy. On the following Sabbath a still more powerful camp-meeting was held at East Tuddenham. Though in an agricultural district, and therefore not densely populated, thousands of persons attended. A great measure of Divine unction accompanied the word preached. About ten o'clock in the morning sinners began to tremble under powerful convictions; and "many were struck to the ground like men slain in battle." Some who stood by mocking, were also suddenly overpowered by a discovery of their sins and danger, and fell down in agony of mind. Others who rushed towards the persons in distress to drag them from the place were themselves suddenly seized with deep convictions, and instead of carrying out their purposes of dragging their friends away, fell prostrate on the ground, and united with them in earnest cries to God for pardon and salvation! It was supposed that more than fifty persons found peace through faith in Christ at this memorable meeting.

In the evening of April 24th, 1832, Mr. Key preached at the same place with extraordinary effect. The emotions of the people were so deep and powerful that the meeting, though held in the open-air, was protracted till after the light of day had departed. Hundreds knelt before the Lord in the dark; and the cries of mourners, and the bursts of praise from those who had found peace in Christ, made the village ring. The following morning Mr. Key conducted a prayer-meeting there, when five or six more were brought into the liberty of the gospel.

On the 10th of June Mr. Key preached at Saham for the first time. He began the service in the open-air, but as rain came on he obtained permission to conduct it in a large dwelling-house. After preaching about twenty minutes the people began to be affected in a similar manner as those had been at Tuddenham,

before described. Some fell down under their overpowering emotions, and others fled to the door in alarm. Several found peace through believing. Similar scenes were witnessed at successive visits which Mr. Key paid to this place, where a large and flourishing society was established. He also preached with great effect at Ovington, Bawdeswell, Bodney, Leaming, and other places.

This sphere of missionary labour was so fruitful of good that it was made into a circuit in March, 1832, containing about 600 members. In the ensuing year 100 more were added. "In taking a retrospective view of the rise and progress of what is now called Mattishall circuit," says Mr. Key, "we feel constrained to exclaim, 'the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' I have missioned a tract of country thirty miles in length, embracing more than forty places, in which I have planted near forty churches, containing 700 members, without incurring five shillings expense to the mother circuit!" Well might the successful missionary regard with adoring gratitude the goodness and grace of God.

The extraordinary circumstances attendant on several of the powerful meetings which he conducted, may be accounted for on rational and philosophical principles; and they should neither be regarded as objections to the genuineness of the work of God, nor as adding in anywise to its value. The reality of a work of grace must be decided by its scriptural fruits. Tried by this test, the work we have just narrated will not be found wanting. It made its subjects new creatures, and produced a blessed reformation of manners. In many families where ignorance, vice, and discord had reigned, and in which the voice of prayer had never been heard, the Bible became devoutly read, the incense of prayer and praise daily ascended to the Giver of all good; children were trained in the way in which they should go, and harmony and love prevailed among them. Bad company was forsaken for the sweets of domestic society and the delight of religious worship; impious imprecations gave place to the earnest prayer, and profane songs to the songs of Zion; sobriety, industry, and their attendant virtues, took

the place of drunkenness, idleness, and their kindred vices; and hundreds proved that godliness was profitable unto all things, having the promise both of this life and of that which is to come.

Stepping into the neighbouring county of Suffolk, we find Brandon Circuit conducting successful missionary operations at the ancient town of Bury St. Edmunds. In the year 1829, Messrs. Appleby and Tetley were stationed to this circuit, and during their continuance in it, visited the town just named. Deep and wide religious impresions were made on many minds by the open-air preaching of the missionaries, and other communities largely shared in the fruits of their labours. We recently heard a Baptist minister state, that a certain Dissenting brother at bury St. Edmunds counted eighty persons admitted into the fellowship of his church, who attributed their enlightenment, under God, to the open-air ministrations of the Primitive Methodist missionaries. We cannot state how many persons united in society with the missionaries, but Bury St. Edmunds is now, and has been for several years, the head of a circuit, though not a powerful one.

Leaving the east of England and coming to the north we next have to notice the missionary labours of North Shields circuit, at Berwick-on-Tweed. Mr. W. Clough was the first missionary sent thither. He arrived at the place on the evening of Friday, January 2nd, 1829. Next day he hired a room to preach in, near the Town Hall, capable of holding 300 persons, and gave publicity to his intention to preach in the open air the day following, on Wallace Green, a large plot of ground near the barracks. According to this announcement he preached there on the 4th at half-past one o'clock; and, nothwithstanding the coldness of the season, about 300 persons listened to him with attention and seriousness. In the evening he preached in the room before named, which was excessively crowded, and many returned from the door, being unable to obtain admittance. His congregation was composed of serious and attentive people, influenced to attend, perhaps by a justifiable curiosity to ascertain his doctrines, and observe his mode of preaching. Eleven persons remained at the

close of the public service for conversation with him about the salvation of their souls, whom he promised to meet again for the same purpose on the Tuesday night following. The next day he went to Tweedmouth, obtained the promise of a place to preach in, and then invited the people to attend; but when they assembled the people were not permitted to enter it, and the preacher had to endure the disappointment as best he could. On Tuesday evening his congregation at Berwick assembled half an hour before the appointed time, in order to secure seats, and he felt freedom and help from above in addressing them. On Wednesday the 7th he went to Spittal, where a singular manner of making public announcements obtained. Instead of a regular crier or bellman, a boy went through the place with a wooden trencher and stick, which he employed to arrest attention, and then made his announcements. Mr. Clough engaged him to publish his preaching in the evening, when, notwithstanding the coldness and the wetness of the weather, an encouraging number attended. Mr. Clough also preached at Murton, a colliery three miles west of Berwick on the English side; Ord, a small village a mile south of Berwick; Burnmouth, a small fishing village in Scotland; Horncliff, a large village five miles west of Berwick; and at Paxton, a small village in Scotland; at all which places he met with civility, and with attentive and serious congregations. But Berwick was the principal place of his labours, and here he addressed a large congregation from Sabbath to Sabbath in the open-air, at the Town Hall steps. On the 11th of January he preached there to thousands of persons of all classes,—gentry, clergy, and "the common people,"—all of whom listened with marked attention, and the ringers of the church bells had the courtesy to cease ringing, lest they should disturb the audience. On the following Sabbath he addressed a still larger assembly. The windows of the adjoining houses on all sides were crowded with persons anxious to hear him, most of whom were favourably impressed with the truths he enforced. The room he had taken to preach in was usually crowded; many of the inhabitants invited him to

visit and pray with them, and he had great encouragement in preaching several times to the prisoners in the jail. Mr. Clough, however, remained only three months at Berwick, when he was succeeded by Mr. W. Lister, who found a society of about twenty members, and an encouraging prospect of success. Like his predecessor he preached much in the open-air. From the first Sunday in April to the last in September he preached in the market-place at one o'clock, generally to about 2,000 persons, and mostly in the open air again at six o'clock in the evening. The work of the Lord greatly prospered; many sinners began to inquire the way to Zion with their faces thitherwards; and in the course of eight or nine months the number in society had risen from twenty to 150. A larger place of worship became indispensable, as many persons who wished to hear could not gain an entrance; but there was great difficulty in obtaining a suitable site for building purposes. Much earnest prayer was presented to God on this account, and at length a person, without solicitation, offered as much of his garden as might be required. A sufficient quantity was procured, upon which a beautiful chapel, a school-room, and a minister's house, were speedily erected. The inhabitants liberally contributed towards the expenses, and much kindness was manifested by christians of other denominations. Some remarkable interpositions in behalf of the trustees were realized. Before the first instalment became due the postman brought Mr. Lister a letter containing £70. It was not known from whom this liberal amount was received; the donors subscribed themselves "Three Friends to the Cause." On another occasion, when the trustees were unable to meet the claims of the builders, Messrs. Herod and Lister waited upon a gentleman, a member of another church, stated the circumstances, and requested help till a mortgage could be secured, and he generously lent the requisite amount. He lent in all £100, and ultimately gave the whole to the trust funds, charging Mr. Lister to keep the affair a secret. The Berwick mission continued to prosper; and at the conference of 1831 we find it a separate circuit, with three travelling preachers stationed to it.

We must now leave, for the present, missionary operations in England, and turn to the commencement of missionary labours in Ireland. Shrewsbury circuit has the honour of having sent the first missionary to the sister island. The authorities of the circuit were probably not aware of the difficulties in the way of successful missionary operations in that country, nor of the vast expense which would be requisite to maintain a mission there in vigour and efficiency. The mission which they had begun in Wiltshire had proved so abundantly successful that they probably anticipated considerable success in Ireland, and hoped that but little expense would be incurred before flourishing societies would be established able to sustain themselves. If so their sanguine expectations were not realized. It is pleasing, however, to find that on the morning on which the missionary, Mr. Haslam, who had been travelling in the circuit with credit and success, started on his important undertaking, an early prayer-meeting was appointed to invoke the blessing of God upon his labours. It was numerously attended,—and the fervent supplications offered on his behalf greatly cheered and strengthened the heart of the missionary. This meeting was held on Monday morning, April 2nd, 1832, and at the close of it Mr. Haslam took an affectionate leave of the friends, and proceeded by coach to Liverpool. Thence he sailed to the north of Ireland, and made the populous town of Belfast and its vicinity, the sphere of his operations. He commenced his missionary labours in Belfast on Sunday, April 8th, by preaching twice in the open-air in Smithfield market-place. Some Roman Catholics created a little disturbance at the first service, but a considerable number of persons listened with attention to the word spoken, and appeared to be deeply interested. At the second service two persons began to interrupt him, but were quickly apprehended by the police, and the service then proceeded peacefully, and apparently to the instruction and profit of the hearers. The next day the two men who had disturbed the service were brought before the magistrates and fined, and an assurance was given to Mr. Haslam that he should be protected

in the discharge of his duties. In the evening he preached at Campbell's Mill, where several persons offered to let him preach in their houses. On the following day he preached to a large congregation in Brown-street, Belfast, and was encouraged with the prospect of success. He also took on rent a room for religious worship,—one of singular dimensions, being sixty-seven feet long, and only twelve wide, but it was perhaps the least inconvenient of any which could be procured for the purpose. On the following Sunday he preached again in the market-place, and was interrupted by a publican, a Roman Catholic; but the disturber was taken into custody by the police, and the next day brought before the magistrates and fined. The publican afterwards brought up the police under the charge of false imprisonment; but when the lawyer whom he had engaged to plead his cause heard the case opened, he refused to plead,—a course honourable to his intelligence and uprightness. During the week Mr. Haslam preached at Campbell's Mill and Brown-street, and was grateful to hear sinners begin to cry for mercy. He also formed a society of eight or nine persons, whom he met in class for the first time on the following Sabbath, and was refreshed in spirit with them. Soon afterwards several penitent sinners found peace to their burdened consciences through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and a considerable number were convinced of sin.

The mission made some progress during the year; but we are not able to report the number of members at the conference of 1832, Mr. Haslam had probably been somewhat deceived by appearances, and, it is likely, had not pursued the best course in all respects. He shortly afterwards resigned, and withdrew from the connexion. We do not deem his secession of sufficient moment to merit more than this brief notice, and shall not therefore enter into details. Further notices of the mission will be found in subsequent chapters.

A few weeks after Shrewsbury circuit had sent a missionary to Ireland, Preston Brook circuit sent another. On Friday, April

20th, 1832, Mr. F. N. Jersey sailed from Liverpool for Dublin, apparently intending to commence missionary operations in that city. But upon conversing with some friends on his arrival there on the propriety of open-air preaching, the practice commonly pursued by the connexion's missionaries, he judged it inexpedient to make the attempt in Dublin at that time, on account of the highly-excited state of the Roman Catholic population, political questions in connexion with the Reform Bill having produced unusual fermentation among them, and increased their ordinary bitterness towards Protestants. He therefore departed for the north of Ireland, and made Newry and its vicinity the scene of his missionary labours. He arrived at this town on Tuesday evening, April 24th, and the next few days visited many families, both Protestants and Catholics, apparently with some good effect. On Friday evening he preached to a great concourse of persons, many of whom gave him a hearty welcome. On Sunday, 28th, he preached twice in the open-air; the former time at the foot of High-street, in the midst of the Roman Catholic population. A young man shook his fist in Mr. Jersey's face while he was preaching, and many of the Catholics shouted at him when he had done, but he suffered no further interruption. In the evening, he preached in the centre of the town to a large concourse, and with considerable effect. An intention to mob him had been formed, but could not be carried into execution through the presence of the police, who attended to protect him.

On Wednesday, May 2nd, he went to Banbridge, about ten Irish miles from Newry; he stood upon a great stone in the centre of the town, and preached with freedom and unction to a large assembly, many of whom appeared to listen with profit. The next day he visited Dromore, about six miles from Banbridge, and though the weather was extremely cold, he preached in the market-place to an attentive congregation. On the Friday he went to Lough Brickland, and held an open-air service near the church-yard.

On Sunday, May 6th, he preached in the open-air at Newry, when even many Catholics listened with attention, and some



appeared to be affected. At the close of the service he conducted a prayer-meeting in a private house, at which some persons appeared to be awakened to a sense of their sin and danger. In the evening he addressed the widows at the Alms-houses, many of whom were thankful for the service.

He continued to visit numerous families for religious instruction and prayer, and to preach in the open air at Newry and other places, and had soon the happiness of seeing awakened sinners bowing at the foot-stool of mercy, and crying to the Lord for pardon.

On Sunday, May 20th, he preached twice in the open air at Newry, held three prayer-meetings, gave three exhortations, and formed a society of six members. The next day he preached again in the open air to a numerous congregation, many of whom were deeply affected. He held a prayer-meeting in a private house afterwards, which was excessively crowded, and among the penitents who were seeking the Lord, was one Roman Catholic, who obtained comfort through faith in Jesus, and along with five others, united with the infant society. This mission continued to prosper during the year, and at the following conference reported eighty-six members.

A few months after the opening of Belfast and Newry missions Prees circuit sent a missionary to Lisburn and the neighbourhood, a field of operations lying between the two forenamed stations. According to a notice in the connexional magazine for 1835, the missionary was sent in October, 1832; but we find no account of the mission till March, 1833, when Oswestry branch of Prees circuit, having been made into a separate circuit, undertook the management and support of the Lisburn mission. We learn from the journal of Mr. Richard Cordingley, that he preached at Lisburn, Lembeg, Piper Hill, Brook Hill, Knockerdowney, Culcavey, Long Stone, and other places. Some small societies had then been formed, and an encouraging prospect of success presented itself. When visited a few months afterwards by Mr. Hugh Bourne, it appears to have afforded him considerable

satisfaction, though his notices of it are briefer than those he records of Belfast and Newry, which had been longer established. Other notices of the Irish mission will be found in subsequent chapters; but they will not afford such instances of success as many or most of the missions in England.

We must now record the commencement of a mission to the Norman Isles, now more commonly called the Channel Islands, being situated in the British Channel. They are within sight of the coast of Normandy, in France, from which they are but a few miles distant. Some sailors from Guernsey, one of the principal islands of the group, had attended some meetings of extraordinary power in the Primitive Methodist chapel at South Shields, where a revival of religion was progressing, and being favourably impressed, were wishful for a missionary to be sent to their native island. A great revival of religion had happily occurred in the neighbouring town of Sunderland and its vicinity, and that circuit was therefore able to undertake a new mission, especially as its mission in Edinburgh had been transferred to another circuit. Sunderland and South Shields circuit agreed to send a missionary to the islands in question, and Mr. George Cosens, a native of the West Indies, and a person of colour, was selected for the purpose. He sailed from Sunderland on Monday evening, May 7th, 1832. A few friends went on board to accompany him out of the harbour, and a large concourse followed along the pier. With pious simplicity and fervent zeal they sang a hymn of praise to God, and the stillness of the night, the melody of numerous human voices, the occasion of the gathering, and the view of the calm majestic ocean, all conspired to render the scene one of thrilling interest. Many devout aspirations ascended to heaven in behalf of the missionary, that he might have a safe and prosperous voyage, and be rendered abundantly useful in the lovely islands to which he was bound. He was favoured with a quick passage, arriving at Guernsey on the 11th of May, only four days after he sailed out of Wearmouth. On the following Sabbath morning he preached on board the Hebe, the vessel in which he



sailed from Sunderland, to about 400 persons; and in the afternoon to a large assembly on the New Ground, a beautiful place in the outskirts of the town, whither multitudes resort for purposes of pleasure and recreation. Above a thousand persons were supposed to be assembled on this occasion, all of whom conducted themselves with the utmost decorum, and listened with marked attention to the fluent and animated preacher, and it was hoped that deep religious impressions were made on many minds. He preached again on board the Hebe, at six o'clock in the evening, when hundreds, who could not find room on board, stood on the shore and devoutly listened to an earnest and soul-stirring sermon. The next night Mr. Cosens preached on board again, to a great concourse, and with similar freedom and effect as on the former occasions.

On Wednesday the 16th he proceeded to Jersey, the largest island in the group, and preached there on the 20th. He occupied the Parade Ground in the outskirts of the Town, where he spoke twice to much smaller congregations than he had addressed in Guernsey. About 150 persons surrounded him in the afternoon; some of whom were attentive, but others very careless. In the evening about 250 persons were congregated to hear him, and a much better impression was produced than in the afternoon. Guernsey, however, was deemed the more suitable island for the first station, and Mr. Cosens accordingly returned to it without delay. But Mr. Joseph Haughton was soon afterwards sent to assist Mr. Cosens in the mission, and then both Guernsey and Jersey were occupied; a preaching-room was fitted up in each island, and a society formed in each. In the month of March following the mission numbered 110 members. But an unhappy circumstance immediately afterwards occurred, which brought the society into disrepute, and clouded the fair prospect of the mission in Guernsey. Some thoughtless, giddy young persons had conducted themselves in a very unseemly manner in the preaching-room at St. Peter's Port, Guernsey, and Mr. Cosens unhappily employed an imprudent expression respecting the behaviour of

one of them, for which he was summoned to the royal court, where a heavy fine was inflicted upon him, and the case, greatly exaggerated, was reported in the Gazette, the most widely circulated paper in the island. In many parts of England the imprudent expression would not have excited much attention; but in Guernsey, prejudice and various circumstances which we need not name, caused it to be regarded in a most unfavourable light, and it proved a great impediment in the way of the society's progress for some time.

We conclude the missionary enterprises of the period under consideration in this chapter, with a brief record of a mission to America. Many of the members and office-bearers of the connexion had emigrated to the United States from many parts of England, and a large portion of these were wishful for preachers of their own community to be sent after them. The subject had been discussed occasionally for several years, and had engaged the earnest prayers of several warm-hearted friends to the enterprise. But few or none of them, we persume, were fully aware of the difference between the circumstances of the United States and those of their own country. The spirit of enterprise is, however, to be highly appreciated. Without it the world will never be converted to God, nor the religion of Christ make much advancement among men. And if it should occasionally lack the accompaniment of requisite prudence and discretion, this defect should excite our regret rather than our censure. Subsequent events have made many intelligent friends doubt the prudence of sending missionaries to the United States at all, and others to question the wisdom of the selection made. The circuits, however, which undertook this important mission were doubtless actuated by pure and noble motives, and their efforts deserve a grateful notice in these pages. Tunstall and Hull circuits had the honour of sending the first Primitive Methodist missionaries to the continent of America. But they rightly judged that a mission of such magnitude should not be undertaken by individual circuits, without the sanction of the connexional representatives assembled in con-

ference. The subject was therefore brought before the conference held at Scotter, in Lincolnshire, in 1829, which "made the necessary arrangements for carrying the purpose into effect." Four missionaries were approved for this work; Mr. W. Knowles and Miss R. Watkins for Tunstall circuit,—and Messrs. William Summersides and Thomas Morris for Hull circuit. They sailed from Liverpool together on June 19th, 1829, and after a rough and tedious passage of six weeks, they landed in safety at New York, on the 31st of July. Soon after their arrival Messrs. Summersides and Morris proceeded to Philadelphia, and Mr. Knowles and Miss Watkins remained at New York. From the circumstances in which Mr. Knowles found himself placed immediately after landing, it appears that the missionaries were not furnished with a large amount of money, with which to meet the necessary expenses of the mission. From the account of the peparture of the missionaries, published in the connexional magazine, evidently written by Mr. Hugh Bourne, it might be inferred otherwise. It is therein said, "The cost of the hymn-books and other matters, for enabling the missionaries properly to enter upon their important labours has been great, and a large sum of money has been expended in their outfit, and in providing them with books and other necessaries. The circuits are, therefore, earnestly requested as speedily as they can, to send in their missionary contributions; and it is earnestly desired that every circuit will contribute on this occasion; and the more so, as not only has there been a large debt contracted on account of the American Mission, but as other missions also want assistance." But the terms, "large sums of money," and "a large debt," are to be taken in agreement with Mr. Bourne's rigid economical views, and in comparison with the small amount of money hitherto expended on most of the connexion's missions. The high rents in New York, and the circumstances of the principal class of persons among whom the missionaries were most likely to labour for a time, were probably not adequately conceived either by Mr. Bourne or others. Mr. Knowles and his colleague began

their missionary efforts amidst discouragements and trials, which would have damped the energies of most persons. For a time, however, they witnessed such a measure of success as greatly cheered them in their labours. The prospect of establishing flourishing societies appeared to them very animating, and we find them soon involved in such pecuniary responsibilities for rents of preaching rooms as would have made more prudent and cautious persons tremble. A new chapel was commenced almost immediately, though very little was collected towards its erection. It was opened on the 27th of December, 1829, only five months after the arrival of the missionaries. It cost about 680 dollars, a small sum certainly; but of this amount no fewer than 600 dollars were borrowed on interest! Yet the sanguine missionary calculated that it would be out of debt in about three years. And in the same letter in which he gives this account, he says, "We have some thoughts of either buying or building another chapel at New York!" Speculations like these were almost certain to bring tremendous expense on the mission, or effect its ruin. The economical connexion in England was not prepared to meet the deficiency of such expenditure, and difficulties soon arose through these imprudent speculations.

Messrs. Summersides and Morris do not appear to have been so imprudent in speculation at Philadelphia as Mr. Knowles was at New York; but they suffered much from affliction, which greatly impeded the success of the mission. In a letter, dated Philadelphia, February 10th, 1830, Mr. Summersides says, "According to human appearances our success at Philadelphia would have been great had it not been for our afflictions. We are sometimes well for two or three weeks, and then we are ill again and not able to preach. Then the people are disappointed, and when we are able to preach we are at a loss for a congregation." From the same letter we learn that there was nothing owing for preaching-rooms, as they were occupied free of rent, and that there was then a society of forty members in Philadelphia. Mr. Summersides had also visited Pott's-ville, about ninety miles from Philadelphia

where he formed a small society of fifteen or sixteen members, who had, it is presumed, belonged to the Primitive Methodists in their fatherland. On the occasion of his visit a number more united with them, and he left an organized society of thirty-four members, five or six of whom had been exhorters in England. This place afterwards became a separate mission station.

Other openings presented themselves, and several additional missionaries were employed. At the conference of 1831 we find the following stations and preachers:—*New York*, G. Parsons and T. Edwards; *Philadelphia*, T. Morris and W. Tansur; *Cincinnati*, W. Knowles; *Hudson*, A Wearing; and W. Summersides and R. Watkins were appointed to open new missions. The number of members had not arrived when the stations were printed. We have little more to add in this place respecting these missions. Several untoward circumstances occurred which retarded their progress; some of the missionaries got discouraged, and relinquished the work; and the societies soon became independent of the connexion in England, retaining still a friendly relation, but altogether separate, being both self-governed and self-supported. They, however, continued in a state of weakness and feebleness. On the whole, the mission to the United States of America must be regarded as a partial failure. Doubtless a considerable number of souls were brought to God under the labours of the missionaries, so that the enterprize was not altogether fruitless. But it greatly disappointed the expectations of its sanguine advocates, and taught lessons of humility and instruction to the connexion at large.

The mission to Canada was more successful, and merits a brief record in this chapter. Mr. William Lawson, a local preacher from Carlisle circuit, emigrated to Upper Canada, and in July, 1829, just before the missionaries arrived at New York, commenced preaching in the open-air in the market-square, Toronto, then a small town of unpromising appearance, usually called Little York. He continued the practice till October, when a small school-house in Duke-street was obtained for preaching. Appli-

cation was made to the mission at New York for a travelling preacher, to assist in establishing and extending the connexion in Canada. Mr. Knowles, writing to the General Committee, under date of November 24th, 1829, says, "I received a letter this week from W. Lawson, one of our local preachers in Upper Canada. There is another of our local preachers with him, and they are about to form a society in our name, and have sent for a travelling preacher; but none can go at present." In a brief "History of Primitive Methodism at Toronto," written by Mr. E. Barrass, and published in the connexional magazine for 1856, it is stated that the first class formed in Canada was organized in September, 1829, at the house of Mr. Lawson, who was elected the leader and Mr. R. Walker was chosen the assistant leader. This class consisted of seventeen members. The school-house in Duke-street becoming too small for the congregation, the school-house of Mr. Thompson, who had belonged to the society at Driffield, in Yorkshire, was obtained for preaching services.

In August, 1830, Mr. N. Watkins, the first regular missionary to Canada, arrived there. Writing under date of October 27th, 1830, he says, "I found a small society of sixteen persons, chiefly emigrants, who had belonged to us and the Wesleyans in England. Two or three of them were local preachers. They held their meetings in a school-house in the suburbs. Since my arrival the society has augmented to thirty-four members, and the congregations are large and attentive." Mr. Watkins opened several places in the country, and, at the date last named, had formed three small societies, containing in all about twenty members. Mr. Watkins shortly afterwards removed to Albany, in the United States; and in October 1831, Mr. Summersides, after enduring many hardships and privations on the road, through the failure of his pecuniary resources, arrived at Toronto, and met with a hearty welcome from Mr. Lawson and the rest of the society. He soon proceeded to the places which had been opened in the country, and was encouraged with the prospect of good. On December 6th the quarterly meeting of the mission was held,



when the number of members was found to be upwards of a hundred. We find from Mr. Summerides' journal, in the following spring, that his work on the mission was very laborious, and required much bodily strength to perform it. Under date of February 2nd, 1832, he says, "The last thirteen days I have preached sixteen times, led two classes, ridden fifty miles, and walked seventy. The cold has been very severe. At nights every thing around us has been frozen, and the white rime and frost have lain very thick upon the beds in the morning." The mission, however, was making some progress, which afforded him consolation under his toils and privations. At the quarterly meeting held on March 1st, the number of members was 132, and the prospect of success in the province was thought to be more cheering than ever before. The names of the local preachers inserted on the plan of the mission for the ensuing quarter were the following;—J. P. A. Cherry, M. Brodrick, W. Lawson, R. Walker, R. Smith, S. Dutton, T. Turley, T. Horsley, T. Lowden, J. Agar, T. Lacup, and J. Wilkinson. Besides these were the names of four exhorters:—W. Craig, R. Middleton, D. Walderage, and M. Watson. The names of the places were York, Woodells, P. School-house, Scarborough, Blue Bell, Smith's, Centre Road, Churchville, Sheetsville, Switzer's School-house, Four Corners, Claridge's, Paisley's, Don Mills, Wallace's, Hogg's Mills, Thorn Hill, Nicholes's, Humber and Haton, some of which are now the principal places in several circuits.

At the conference of 1832, the Canadian Mission was placed under the care of Hull circuit, and made some encouraging progress during the ensuing year. On the 3rd of September, the autumnal Quarterly Meeting was held, when the members reported were 195; the financial affairs had also improved, and fresh openings presented themselves for the extension of the mission. On the 21st of the following month, a new chapel was opened at Toronto, calculated to seat between five and six hundred persons, probably an inaccurate calculation. The cost of erection was between seven and eight hundred pounds, towards which between

two and three hundred was collected; leaving too heavy a debt upon the premises, which afterwards pressed heavily upon the few principal supporters.

The mission had made such advancement in the summer of 1833, that Mr. Josiah Partington was sent from Hull circuit to assist in its further extension; but its future progress must be reserved for subsequent chapters.

While the missionary operations we have recorded in this chapter were being carried out, with more or less success, the circuits generally were making some advancement. At the conference of 1829 the number of members was 33,720, of travelling preachers 228, of local preachers 2,491, and of chapels 403, being an increase for the year of 2,110 members, 24 travelling preachers, 282 local preachers, and 79 chapels. At the conference of 1830 the number of members was 35,733, of travelling preachers 240, of local preachers 2,719, of chapels 421; being an increase for the year of 2,013 members, of 12 travelling preachers, of 228 local preachers, and of 18 chapels. The conference of 1831 reported 37,216 members, 257 travelling preachers, 2,897 local preachers, and 451 chapels; being an increase for the year of 1,681 members, 17 travelling preachers, 178 local preachers, and 30 chapels. The numbers in the United States of America were not included in these. The conference of 1832 reported 41,301 members, 274 travelling preachers, 3,156 local preachers, and 497 chapels; being an increase for the year of 4,185 members, of 17 travelling preachers, of 259 local preachers, and 76 chapels. The conference of 1833 reported 48,421 members, 290 travelling preachers, 3,514 local preachers, 552 chapels; being an increase of 7,120 members, 26 travelling preachers, 358 local preachers, and 55 chapels. The total increase for the five years was 16,811 members, 86 travelling preachers, 1,350 local preachers, and 231 chapels.

It will be observed that by far the largest increase during this period was in the last year. The Asiatic cholera had made fearful ravages in most parts of the kingdom during this year, and had

been one means in the hands of God of awakening multitudes to a sense of their sin and danger, of inducing thousands to flee to Christ for salvation, and had largely contributed to the increase of members. The progress of many of the circuits might be given in detail, but such is the length to which this chapter has extended, and the brevity which we must keep in view, that we omit the insertion, and here close the chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

Brinkworth Circuit's Bristol Mission—Witney Circuit's Mission—A society formed at Oxford—Motcombe Circuit's extension—Blandford Mission—Poole Mission—Weymouth Mission—Shefford Circuit's missionary operations—Farringdon Mission—Wallingford Mission—Thame Mission—Andover Mission—Mitcheldever Mission—Reading Mission—Aylesbury Mission—Marlborough Mission—Reading Circuit's Missions and success—Imprisonment of Mr. J. Morton at Hereford—Opening of Monmouth—Bromyard Mission—Cwm Circuit's Mission in Monmouthshire—Blaenavon Circuit's Mission to Swansea—Newtown Mission—Burland Circuit's prosperity—Northampton Mission—Nottingham Circuit—Ilkeston made a Circuit—Loughborough Circuit's Mission to Melton Mowbray—Ipswich Mission—Wangford Circuit's Missions—Newmarket Mission—Rapid progress of Yarmouth Circuit—Statistics of the Connexion—Progress from the Conference of 1833 to that of 1840.

IN the present chapter we purpose to detail the progress of the connexion for a period of seven years, extending from the conference of 1833 to that of 1840. We begin with the missionary operations of Brinkworth circuit, being among the first in the order of time of those of which we have found a record. The former missionary enterprises of this prosperous and vigorous circuit having proved abundantly successful, its ministers and office-bearers were induced to enter upon another. The city of Bristol, as mentioned in a former chapter, had been visited eight or nine years before, when little success was realized; but it was thought that it might now be visited successfully, notwithstanding the failure of the former feeble and temporary efforts there. The matter was made a subject of earnest prayer among both preachers and people, and after nearly twelve months deliberation and fervent supplication for the Divine guidance and blessing, the affair

was decided. Two zealous and laborious brethren, Messrs. Samuel West and Samuel Turner, were chosen for the work, and sent forth in the name of the Lord, in humble but confident expectation of his support and blessing. They arrived at Bristol on Saturday, July 13th, 1833, and went through various parts of it in order to select suitable places for open-air preaching on the following day. On the 14th, being Sunday, they began their missionary labours by preaching in the morning in the open-air at Poynt's Pool, a densely populated neighbourhood, greatly needing plain and earnest gospel ministrations, and were encouraged with the hope of success. In the afternoon Mr. Turner preached with power to an attentive congregation in Queen's Square. In the evening Mr. West addressed a large and respectable assembly near the Draw Bridge, and deep religious impressions appeared to be made upon the people. On the following night, when Mr. West preached again at Poynt's Pool, mournful evidence was afforded of the depraved character of some of the inhabitants; drunkards and prostitutes were fighting and mangling each other's flesh in a shocking manner. The missionaries, however, continued the service, and many of the people listened to them attentively. Mr. West preached again in this depraved locality on the following Sabbath morning, and Mr. Turner on Monday evening, July 22nd; and after the sermon of the latter they conducted a prayer-meeting in a private house, which was crowded with people, many of whom wept on account of sin, and prayed earnestly for salvation. The succeeding services held in this neighbourhood were equally effective, and a considerable amount of good appeared to be accomplished. The missionaries were also favoured with more or less success in preaching in the open-air in Little Ann street, in Queen's square, on the Quay, on St. Phillip's Plain, in Great Gardens, and in Broad street. Attentive congregations listened with deep interest to their earnest addresses, and derived therefrom much spiritual benefit. Encouraged by those tokens of good they took on rent a small chapel, called "Dolman's chapel," which was opened for Divine

service on the 25th of August, six weeks after they arrived in the city. This chapel was situated amidst a poor and dense population, among whom the missionaries had already been useful to an encouraging extent, and the opening services, conducted by Mr. Foizey from Bath, were crowned with the conversion of an infidel, and that of several other persons. A small society of twelve members had been formed on the 4th of August, and it now augmented weekly.

The missionaries also visited Bedminster, Fish Ponds, and Kingswood, and met with encouraging success. Mr. Turner preached first at Bedminster on Sunday afternoon, July 28th, and Mr. West on the following Sunday. On the 22nd of August Mr. West preached there in a small room, which the missionaries had taken on rent, when one person was awakened to a sense of her danger as a sinner. Several other persons had previously been brought to God there under the preaching of Mr. Turner.

Mr. West preached first at Fish Ponds on Sunday afternoon, August 25th. He preached there again on Monday evening, September 2nd; and though it rained during the whole time, the people stood still to the close, and the prospect of good was very animating.

On Wednesday, September 4th, the missionaries first went to Kingswood. They sang and prayed in the streets, but the weather being too cold for preaching in the open-air, they held a service in a public-house—a very unusual place for such a purpose—but the house was crowded with hearers, and the preachers felt the presence of their Divine Master, and were cheered with the hope of success. Mr. West visited Kingswood again on the 25th of September, and found several persons labouring under conviction of sin.

The good work thus encouragingly begun in this ancient city and neighbourhood continued to progress, and under date of October 15th, Mr. West says:—"God has owned our labours on this mission, and raised up a people for Himself who were not a people. At present the state of the mission is very encouraging,

and with proper management and diligent attention, it will, I believe, prosper." In the circuit report for March, 1835, it is said, "In taking a view of the work of God in Bristol mission, we have much cause for thankfulness to the Great Head of the Church. We have had much opposition to contend against, but amidst it all the Lord has prospered the work of our hands. We preach at twenty places, and have 172 members in society." During the next two years the mission acquired stability, and made a little advancement. It was made into a separate circuit in March, 1837, with two travelling preachers, twenty local preachers, and 190 members. In the year 1840 the number of members had increased to 240. The want of suitable places of worship was a cause of the progress not being more rapid.

The home part of Brinkworth circuit prospered considerably during this period; fresh places appear to have been visited successfully, and at the conference of 1840 it contained 800 members.

We now turn to the neighbouring circuit of Witney, in Oxfordshire, where also we find tokens of prosperity and enlargement. The state of the circuit in March, 1835, encouraged the authorities to employ another travelling preacher, and to send out Mr. Joseph Preston as a missionary into adjoining places. On Monday, the 13th, 1835, he started on his missionary tour. The next day he preached at Great Bourton, and on Wednesday at Mullington to a large and attentive congregation. On Thursday he preached at Claydon, and on Friday at Lower Middleton. These and the following places are populous villages in the northern parts of Oxfordshire, a few miles from the town of Banbury. The following week he preached again at several of these places, and also at Farthinghoe, Thenford, and Culworth; and on Monday, May 4th, he preached at Farnborough. At most of these places considerable good was done, and societies were formed. A society had been previously established at the village of Chacombe, not far distant from the places just named, all of which were embraced in what was first called the "Chacombe Mission." Soon afterwards an entrance appears to have been effected into the town of Banbury.

for in the circuit report for 1836, it is said, "The Banbury mission is doing well." We regret that we have not been able to collect more information respecting the progress of this mission. Many circumstances doubtless occurred which would have been read with interest and profit, had they been recorded. But in the absence of full information, all we can safely say respecting the Banbury mission is, that it made some progress, and at the conference of 1840 it was a separate circuit, containing 262 members.

In May, 1835, Mr. Preston, the superintendent of Witney circuit, visited the city of Oxford with a view to establishing a society therein. On the 11th of May he "went to Oxford—a sink of iniquity—and at night preached in the open-air in Jericho, to a large, but somewhat disturbed congregation." The next evening he preached in the open-air at Church corner, St. Thomas's, after which he conducted a prayer-meeting in a private house. Next morning at six o'clock he preached there again to a goodly number of persons, including those who stood at a distance, and those who listened at their doors and windows. Before leaving the city, he made arrangements for supplying it with regular preaching; and at the circuit's Quarterly meeting, held on the 15th of the following month, a society had been formed at Oxford. How long this society continued in existence we have not been able to ascertain, certainly not a long time, for in a subsequent part of this chapter we shall have to narrate a re-commencement of missionary efforts in this city.

Motcombe circuit considerably extended its borders by missionary efforts during the period to which this chapter refers. In 1832, the circuit being both small and unable to support the two preachers who were labouring in it, it was determined in the spring of 1833 to liberate Mr. Richard Davies, the superintendent, from a part of his regular work, that he might visit fresh places. In the first week of May he preached at Henstridge, Strickland, Helton, Kingston, and Durweston, and was encouraged with some prospect of success. Shortly afterwards he visited Abbey Milton, Hepton, Ansty, Whitechurch, and other places. On Sunday, the



7th of July, he performed an amount of labour which would soon weaken the strongest constitution. In the morning he preached at Ansty to a number of well-behaved persons, who stood still and listened attentively, notwithstanding the wetness of the weather. He preached at Strickland in the afternoon, where some young persons in a carriage attempted in vain to disturb the congregation. At five o'clock he addressed a large congregation at Helton; and at seven at Abbey Milton. Having walked nineteen miles and preached four times in the open air he felt much fatigued, and was obliged to seek lodgings at a public-house.

Many of the places named surround the town of Blandford, in Dorsetshire, which was also visited by the preachers in Motcombe circuit, and soon became the head of a branch. The opposition which the missionaries met with in this district was great, and their privations and sufferings were manifold and severe; but they persevered in their pious labours, and the Lord crowned their efforts with encouraging success. Ere Mr. Davies left the circuit, in July, 1834, the new places visited supported an additional preacher, and the old places had so much improved as to be able to support two. The ensuing year was also prosperous. In the circuit report for 1835 the authorities say, "The Saviour of sinners has graciously visited our circuit, and each branch has had an increase of fifty members." The home branch and Blandford branch are those to which reference is made in this extract. The year following was equally prosperous. The circuit reported 100 increase of members. The home branch had been the more successful, but in Blandford branch the good work had been steadily advancing.

The circuit also extended its missionary labours to Poole, a seaport town. The report for 1836 says, "We have recently opened Poole as a mission, and we have a pleasing prospect of success." In 1837 we find it a branch of the circuit. In the circuit report for that year it is said, "Poole branch is doing well. The Lord is carrying on his work in the conversion of sinners." During the ensuing year this branch continued to prosper, and in March,



1838, only a little above two years after it was first visited by the preachers from Motcombe, it was made into a separate circuit, with 260 members and two travelling preachers. We regret that we are unable to furnish details of the missionary work which so soon resulted in the formation of this circuit. We have sought in vain for information upon the subject, and are therefore compelled to pass over the mission with this brief notice. At the time that Poole became the head of a separate circuit the work of God was prospering there, and the friends were cheered with the prospect of a further ingathering of precious souls. Their expectations were not entirely cut off; a small increase of members was realized during each of the two next succeeding years, the number reported for 1839 being 270, and for 1840, 282.

We must now turn to another part of Dorsetshire, as a field of missionary labour which Sunderland circuit undertook to cultivate. The missions in Guernsey and Jersey, chiefly supported by that circuit, were gradually recovering from the injury they had sustained through the imprudence mentioned in the foregoing chapter, and were raising an increasing measure of support towards the maintenance of the missionaries there; and as Sunderland circuit found itself in circumstances to support additional missionary labours, it wisely determined to undertake a new mission. Weymouth, a fashionable sea-port town in Dorsetshire, was selected as the centre of operations, and Messrs. Nelson and Cosens were appointed to this new field of labour. Their reception was highly flattering, and the prospect of great success was cheering. At Dorchester, indeed, they met with serious interruption; guns were fired, artificial thunder was produced in the theatre near which they stood, and other noises were made in order to prevent them from preaching, or render them inaudible; and on one occasion a bucket full of water was poured upon the head of Mr. C., and on another he was pelted with cabbage stalks and other missiles. But these annoyances were not of very long continuance; they gradually subsided, and the services were held in comparative peace. At Weymouth and other places no such



interruptions were experienced. Congregations listened peacefully to the fluent and fervent addresses of the missionaries, and many persons appeared to be convinced of sin and to become anxious seekers of salvation. A large room was taken on rent at Weymouth, and a small society formed there on the 16th of May, 1834. Unhappily, however, the flattering prospect with which the missionaries had been elated, was soon clouded. They had not perhaps made due allowance for the excitement and curiosity produced through Mr. C. being a man of colour, nor for other causes which contributed to their cheering reception. But a difference which arose between themselves was the greatest hindrance to their success. This weakened their energies, and created a party spirit among the people, some taking the side of Mr. Nelson, and others that of Mr. Cosens. It gives us no pleasure to record these matters; we are actuated solely by a sense of duty, and a desire to maintain historic fidelity. We enter not into the cause or occasion of this unhappy difference between the two brethren; we express no opinion on the merits of the case on either side; we simply record the fact, and we do this with deep regret, as it proved greatly detrimental to the infant mission, and led to the separation of both brethren from the connexion. Mr. Cosens soon resigned his office as a preacher, and withdrew from the society, some of the members also going with him, and he shortly afterwards became a Baptist minister. Mr. Nelson left the connexion soon after he removed from Weymouth. The judgment which Mr. Hugh Bourne and others formed of occurrences which had taken place there, operated on his mind prejudicially, and under the force of discouragement he withdrew from a community among whom he had laboured many years with a large measure of success, and by whom he was deservedly held in high esteem. He afterwards became a minister of the Methodist New Connexion.

Weymouth Mission did not soon recover the shock which the unhappy difference we have just named occasioned, and, perhaps, never presented such a flattering prospect as it did when Messrs.

Nelson and Cosens began their missionary labours there. In t subsequent year it was indeed greatly enlarged through th enterprising labours of Mr. Thomas Russell, and in the year 183 we find no fewer than four travelling preachers stationed to it then under the care of Manchester circuit; but the societies neve acquired, unless till recently, the prosperity and strength whicl most societies in other stations in Dorsetshire have done.

Leaving this country we next turn to the missionary operation conducted by Shefford circuit in various parts of Berkshire, Wilt shire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire. We begi with Farringdon branch in Berkshire. In a former chapter w detailed the commencement of Farringdon mission, and the per secutions through which Mr. Russell and others had to pass er societies could be established. We now briefly record the progres of this mission. Mr. W. Harvey, to whom we are indebted fo most of the facts we are about to narrate, commenced his labour in this mission, or branch of Shefford circuit, in January, 1835 Though in the depth of winter, he preached on his first Sabbath there in the morning, in the market-place at Abingdon, and a two other places in the open-air on the same day. He also formed a small society in a dwelling-house at Abingdon; preaching in the open-air having probably been conducted there for some time Mr. R. Langford having preached there in the market-place in March, 1834. Persecution still raged at some places on the mission, but the work of God prospered in the midst of it. In the circuit report for March, 1835, it was said to be in a pros perous state, and during the preceding nine months there had been an increase of about eighty members in the society. In the spring of this year Messrs. G. Price, W. Harvey, and W. Peacefull, the missionaries then labouring in this district, devoted themselves with renewed ardour to the blessed work of spreading the gospel among the inhabitants, and visited some new places successfully. Amongst these was the village of Sparsholt, where a great work of grace was wrought. Among the numerous converts was Mr. Jonathan Bush, who fitted up a little chapel

on his own premises, in which many souls were brought to the Saviour. Hither many persons flocked from the surrounding villages, in order to find Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. Daily prayer-meetings were held here throughout the summer; and in the midst of the hay and corn harvests farmers and labourers assembled by hundreds under two large trees, to render praise to the bountiful Giver of all good, and to invoke his blessing. Sixty or seventy persons found peace at this village, and the revival extended to other places.

From the journal of Mr. Peacefull, published in the connexional magazine for 1837, we learn that the society was formed at Sparsholt, on the 6th of September, and then numbered six members. The labours of Mr. Peacefull, as detailed in his journal, were a fair specimen of those of his brethren generally in that mission field. A few instances shall be recorded of his Sabbath day's labours. On Sunday, August 16th, 1835, he preached at Shrivenham at nine o'clock in the morning, at Bourton at half-past ten, at Bishopstone at five in the afternoon, and afterwards spoke at a missionary meeting. He also walked thirteen miles, and prayed with eight familes. The next Sabbath, he preached three times, and led a lovefeast. On the 30th he walked twelve miles and preached four times in the open-air, namely, at Westcott, Farnham, Kingstone, Lisle, and Sparsholt. It was quite dark ere he finished his last sermon, yet he held a prayer-meeting afterwards, when cries for mercy ascended from every part of the congregation, and ten or more persons found peace in believing. It is no wonder that labours like these should soon enfeeble the strongest constitutions, and bring men to a premature grave, nor that they should prove successful in the conversion of many sinners. Among the places at which societies were formed on this mission, during this year, we notice Shrivenham, where Mr. Jukes and Mr. Russell met with the opposition and persecution described in former chapters. On the 11th of October, 1835, Mr. Peacefull formed a society of eleven members in this village, five of whom had formerly met in class at Bourton, the remainder

May, while Mr. Peacefull was preaching at Brill, he was much annoyed by several persons who offered him beer to drink, and shouted in his ears; and while engaged in the last prayer they poured two buckets full of water upon him. On the 23rd he preached at Chilton, where some persecutors besmeared him with rotten eggs. In July 1838, there were about eighty members in this mission, though some small societies had been broken up through persecution and lack of houses to meet in. On the 9th of this month, a powerful Camp-meeting was held at Morton, near Thame, when great good was done, and the beneficial effects of which were felt throughout the year.

In March, 1839, the circuit, including Thame mission, numbered 300 members, and the societies and congregations were improving. During the ensuing year, also, some advancement was made, notwithstanding the determined manner in which both rich and poor continued to oppose the progress of the cause. In some places the rich would not permit the preachers to hold services in the houses of their tenants; in others the poor annoyed them by raising tumults and by using abusive and profane language, sometimes even violently breaking up the meetings of the pious and peaceful worshippers.

Several chapels were built and opened for divine worship in the course of the year, which merit a brief notice. The first in the order of time was a small one in the city of Oxford. The society formed in this city by Mr. Preston, as noticed in a former chapter, appears early to have become extinct; but three local preachers remained there. In the summer of 1838 these, and some young persons belonging to the city, attended a powerful camp-meeting held at the village of Marsh Baldon, about six miles distant. Several of the young persons obtained spiritual good at the love-feast held in the evening. This led to an invitation being given to Mr. West to visit Oxford. He did so on the following evening, when he preached in the street with much freedom and power, and afterwards conducted a prayer-meeting in a private house, and formed a class of seven members. At the September quar-



terly meeting of Wallingford circuit, Oxford was put upon the preacher's plan, and regularly supplied with preaching. Mr. Dingle, one of the local preachers there, erected a small chapel for the use of the connexion, which was taken on rent, and opened for Divine worship, April 21st, 1839.

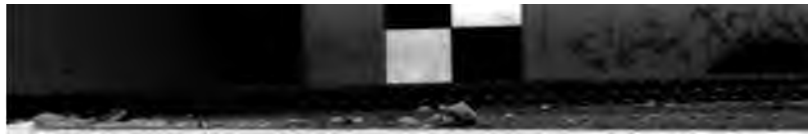
Other small chapels were erected at North Moreton, near Wallingford, at Moreton, near Thame, at Dorchester, and at Toot Baldon. At North Moreton the society had been subjected to much inconvenience through lack of a place to worship in. For a few years they were permitted to assemble in an unoccupied part of a malt-house during the winter season, and in inclement weather; but when this was taken down no convenient place could be obtained for worship, and the friends had to assemble in the open-air both winter and summer. The society lost much strength during the three years they had to suffer these inconveniences; but they continued to cry to God for assistance, and at length an old cottage and garden were purchased at a moderate price, and a chapel was erected in the garden, and opened for Divine worship on the 18th of August, 1839.

Moreton, in the parish of Thame, Oxfordshire, was not so distinguished by violent opposition to the missionaries as many places in this county. Mr. Joseph Way, a respectable farmer, early befriended them, allowed them to preach in one of his barns, and hospitably entertained them. He and Mrs. Way also obtained spiritual good, and identified themselves with the society. A blessed work of grace broke out in the village, and a striking change for the better took place in the intelligence and morals of the inhabitants. The congregations increased, and Mr. Way being desirous of establishing a Sabbath-school, which could not be conveniently taught in his barn, generously gave land for a chapel, and otherwise liberally assisted in the erection. It was opened for religious service on the 1st of September, 1839, and a flourishing Sabbath-school was soon afterwards established therein.

At Dorchester, a populous village in Oxfordshire, four miles north-west of Wallingford, the missionaries had to encounter the

most formidable and determined opposition, and to endure violent and brutal persecution. For some time they were stoned both as they entered and left the village on Sabbath mornings. On one occasion Mrs. Wheeldon was hit on the eye with a stone, a pious aged female had her head cut open, and another member of society had two of his teeth knocked out with a stone. A number of young persons of the baser sort were encouraged in their savage treatment of the preachers by some in the higher classes; and the lives of the missionaries were often exposed to imminent peril. A pious and humane gentleman wished to persuade them to discontinue their visits, saying the ruffians would no more mind killing one of them than killing a dog. But the heroic missionaries were not to be easily persuaded to do this; the thought of relinquishing the place was intolerable, and they resolved to persevere in their efforts, even should they have to suffer death in consequence. And deliverance came at length. Several of the gentlemen who had been the abettors in the persecution were suddenly arrested by affliction, and in a few days were called into the presence of their Maker. This event produced a deep and solemn impression among the inhabitants, and the persecutors soon afterwards ceased to stone the preachers. When the dreadful storm of persecution was passed over the good seed which had been sown sprang up, and the society flourished. Several of the persecutors were subdued by the power of divine grace, and were made new creatures in Christ Jesus; among others the constable, who had frequently been employed by the gentlemen to drive the preachers from the village, and who had been a great drunkard, was converted to the Lord and became a new man. A cottage was obtained for preaching during the winter, and this becoming too small, efforts were made to secure a new chapel. A site was obtained for the purpose, many of the former opponents rendered cheerful assistance, and the humble sanctuary was opened for worship on the 18th of September, 1839.

Toot Baldon adjoins Marsh Baldon, before named, a village about six miles south-east of Oxford. For a time the preachers



met with very rough treatment here. On one occasion a son of Belial threw a large stone with such violence at a female preacher as to knock her to the ground and make a serious contusion in her head. And their adherents had to suffer severe trials. A person who had derived benefit from the preaching permitted the missionaries to preach in his house; but immediately after the powerful camp-meeting before named was held at Marsh Baldon, he received notice to quit his house, unless the preaching therein should be discontinued. Several of the farmers likewise ceased to employ him in his trade of harness making. Under these circumstances the preachers deemed it expedient to hold all their meetings in the open-air on the common, and continued to do so till the friends succeeded in erecting a suitable chapel between the villages of Toot Baldon and Marsh Baldon. This little sanctuary was opened for divine worship on Sunday, October 27th, 1839, to the no small joy of the devout people. The erection of these chapels was of considerable service to Wallingford circuit, which at the conference of 1840 numbered 320 members.

We must now notice the missionary efforts of Shefford circuit in Hampshire, and we begin with the Andover Mission. We have already narrated the commencement of missionary operations in this county; but as we are now to record the extension of these evangelical enterprises, it may be proper to state that the inhabitants are chiefly engaged in agriculture—whilst in some parts, sheep are kept in great numbers. The air is salubrious, the the people are healthy, and the families of the poor are generally large. The cotages are clustered together in considerable villages, containing from three to twelve or fifteen hundred persons.

"In the great majority of these villages," says Mr. Bishop, one of the earliest missionaries, "we found neither Independents nor Baptists, nor Wesleyan Methodists, when we entered the county in 1832. In every parish, of course, there was a church; but many hamlets, and some of these of considerable size, were then destitute both of church and school. In many of the villages the people had only one religious service on the Sabbath day,—and had no Sabbath-school and no week-evening lecture.

"The gentry, clergy, and gentlemen farmers, formed one class of society; and shepherds, woodmen, ploughmen, &c., another. These two classes constituted the extremes of civil society; between them was a great chasm, which the limited class of small tradesmen could hardly be said to span. Between the farmer and his labourer the distance was almost incredible. The following facts will give some idea of the condition of the peasantry of Hampshire at the time referred to, and will serve to illustrate their religious state—their moral character—their intellectual culture; or, should I not rather say, their heathenism—their barbarism?"

Andover is a beautiful borough town, containing six or seven thousand inhabitants. Mr. George Wallis was appointed to begin missionary operations there and in the vicinity in the spring of 1833. He first visited the town on Sunday morning, May 5th. A few friends from Upper Hurstbourne, Littledown, and Linkenholt, villages at some miles distance, accompanied him on the occasion. Mr. Wallis and his friends conducted a religious service in a meadow in which fairs were held, and a great number of persons soon assembled, some to hear the preaching, and some to create a disturbance. Several of the latter employed themselves in drinking and swearing in the midst of the congregation; and one of them, more daring than the rest, rushed towards the preacher, and swore he would knock him down if he did not desist, but was happily prevented from accomplishing his purpose. Mr. Wallis preached with freedom in the midst of the disturbance and uproar, finished his discourse in an orderly manner, and announced his intention of preaching there again on the following Sabbath. He fulfilled his purpose, but met with much more serious interruption than on the former Sunday. While engaged in singing and prayer a gang of godless men forced their way into the congregation, and knocked him down. He rose and attempted to preach, but could not for the noise and violence of the mob, who threw rotten eggs, dirt, and other things at him, rushing against him, and vociferating, "They shall not

come here; we have preaching enough already. Kill him! Kill him! He, however, escaped without serious injury; and on the following Sabbath, May 19th, with true heroic courage, he went there again. Mr. W. Wiltshire, and many of the members from the societies in the villages around, met him; and between nine and ten o'clock in the morning they began to sing in the market-place. Several hundred persons were soon drawn together, but many of them purposely to make an uproar, and to prevent the missionaries preaching. They threw rotten eggs at them and their friends, shouted, and pushed them in a violent manner. Notwithstanding this rude behaviour Mr. Wiltshire engaged in prayer, after which Mr. Wallis began to preach. But while holding forth the word of life the beadle of the town approached, seized him by the collar, and pulled him down. Then the infuriated rabble, like the mob which followed our blessed Redeemer along the streets of Jerusalem, cried out, "Away with them! Away with them!" Some of them adding, "Throw them into the river," &c. The beadle and the constable dragged the preachers down the street, and the mob struck them with besoms, sticks, and other instruments, and tore off the skirts of their coats! When the preachers had found shelter in a friend's house, the disappointed persecutors went to vent their rage upon their harmless followers from the neighbouring villages. They drove them furiously out of the town, and then fell upon them in a dreadful manner, cruelly beating both men and women, and tearing their clothes to pieces. This was in Christian England, on the Lord's day, and in the nineteenth century! The missionaries, however, were not to be intimidated by lawless mobs, nor prevented from visiting the town by the cruel and wicked usage they received. They continued their zealous labours despite of all opposition, and succeeded in establishing a society; and in 1838 they erected a neat chapel in a good situation.

While Andover was made the centre of their missionary operations, other towns and villages were regularly visited. Mr. Wallis preached at Stockbridge, a small market town, April 28th, 1833

he Sunday before he preached at Andover. A large congregation attended, to whom he preached with freedom, and with the hope of much good being done. He preached there again on Monday evening, May 13th, and apparently with good effect. The fortnight following he addressed a quiet congregation, no one offering to make any disturbance, except the constable, who forbade his preaching, and threatened to put him into the jail; but a sensible person present advised the constable to retire, lest he should be punished for breaking the peace. He then walked away, and Mr. Wallis proceeded with his discourse; and the people heard him attentively, and appeared to be benefited.

But the peaceable behaviour of the congregations at Stockbridge did not continue long. Violent opposition soon began to manifest itself. Mr. William Fowler, a pious young missionary, who soon after finished his course with joy, visited the town on Sunday, October 6th, 1833, when he was ordered to desist from preaching by order of the bailiff, in very uncourteous and untruthful language. The messenger had no sooner left him, than a drunken mob began to assail him. They pelted him with rotten eggs, and otherwise assaulted him and his friends, being encouraged in their wicked proceedings by the constable! They then got a long rope, with which they surrounded him and his associates, in order to draw them together into the river; and when this was prevented by one or two of his associates cutting the rope with a knife, the persecutors beat them with the pieces of rope, and pelted them out of the place with stones, potatoes, eggs, &c. During the week the opposers threatened still more violent treatment, affirming that they would play the water-engine against them, supplied with blood from a butcher's slaughter-house! Earnest prayer ascended to heaven in their behalf from the persecuted people, and at the appointed time next Sabbath Mr. Fowler went again, unattended by any of his friends, in the true spirit of a martyr, ready to die if necessary for the name of the Lord Jesus. He could not hold a regular service, but he addressed the people in groups as they stood in the streets, and appeared to produce a favourable impression

upon many of their minds. Some of his drunken persecutors, however, rushed out of a beer-shop as he passed by, and pelted him with flint stones. The missionaries, notwithstanding, continued to visit the town, persecution subsided, a house was obtained to preach in, and a good society was established.

At Whitchurch also, another small town, the missionaries met at first with no opposition. Mr. Wallis preached there the first time on the 29th of May, when a large company attended, many of whom received him with great kindness. But afterwards considerable persecution arose, and the open-air services were greatly disturbed. On one occasion a large drum was beaten in order to render the sermon inaudible, and the preachers had to endure many annoyances. Some of the inhabitants, however, were in their favour, and encouraged them to continue their labours. Their opponents printed and posted bills against them, and cautioned people respecting them; their friends printed and posted bills in their defence, and exhorted people to hear them. Mr. Fowler walked seventeen miles thither on the 25th of September, and began to conduct a religious service in the market-place. He had no sooner commenced than a person from a public-house poured out upon him a volley of abuse. But this disturber paid dearly for his interruption; a number of persons immediately surrounded him, some of whom, not having yet experienced the regenerating influence of Divine grace, thrashed him for his rudeness, and sent him about his business, while other persons surrounded the preacher and protected him. Mr. Fowler discoursed with great liberty, and afterwards conducted a good prayer-meeting in a private house. The persevering labours of the missionaries were crowned with success; sinners were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and a society was established.

At several of the villages in the vicinity of these towns the missionaries likewise met with serious interruption, and at some with the most determined and violent opposition. "The following scene occurred," says Mr. Bishop, "at Overton, near Whitchurch,



on a Sabbath morning. The preacher and the friends who accompanied him on the previous Sabbath had been very ill used, and the threatenings as to what should be done to those who should attempt to enter the place were of a fearful character. The preacher went, on this occasion accompanied by one friend only, not knowing what might be permitted to befal him; but in the spirit of a martyr, as willing to die as to return home, should God permit his enemies to take away his life. He met a great number of persons in the street, many of whom were prepared by intoxicating drinks for the work of persecution; and while the preacher was engaged in singing and prayer, as well as when he was preaching the word, they hurled addled eggs at him and his friend, until it was difficult to bear the offensive smell occasioned thereby. Ten or twelve hundred men, women, and children, residing in the place, stood and witnessed these proceedings, either approvingly, or were afraid to manifest any sympathy with the sufferers. One man, not belonging to the place, did approach and scrape the filth from their clothes with his pocket-knife, but this involved him in the same treatment. When the persecutors' stock of ammunition became exhausted, while pursuing the missionary after the service, the flints from the road were freely used; and these, when recently broken, as was not unfrequently the case, were dangerous missiles. Their sharp angles and knife-like edges furnished an illustration, much more practical than agreeable, of the nature and power of those edged instruments which our rude forefathers were accustomed to make out of this material."

St. Mary Bourne was distinguished by the virulent and long-continued opposition of many of its inhabitants. Mr. Wallis preached first at this village on the 9th of May, 1833, when the constable interrupted him, and forbade him preaching. Mr. Wallis replied that he should not hold his peace while so many sinners were perishing for lack of knowledge. He visited the place again on the 23rd, when the constable, as before, commanded him to desist, and a number of the ungodly beat tin kettles, blew horns, fired guns, and shouted with all their might, in order to drown his



voice. He, however, discoursed with freedom and power in the midst of all. On the 26th of September Mr. Fowler preached there with liberty, in the midst of a storm of rotten eggs and stones. On the 3rd of October he met Mr. Wallis there, when they conducted a service as usual in the open-air, and were pelted with rotten eggs, stones, and mortar. They afterwards conducted a prayer-meeting in a private house, during which the persecutors waited for them, in order to assault them again and stone them out of the village. To escape ill-usage they deemed it advisable to put on the long frocks of some labouring men, by which means they were not detected, and got safely away. This violent opposition continued for two years, when it began to subside. The preachers, however, regularly visited the place for three years, and conducted service in the open-air, before they could obtain the loan of a house to preach in. Their indomitable zeal and perseverance at length proved victorious. A house was secured for public worship, and some time afterwards a glorious work of God broke out among the people. A chapel became necessary to accommodate the increasing society and congregation, and in the year 1838 the friends succeeded in erecting one.

Long Parish also offered violent opposition to the missionaries. Here drunkenness and its kindred vices prevailed to a fearful extent. Mr. Wallis first preached at this village on the 8th of May, 1833; a large congregation assembled, some of whom listened with attention, but others made a disturbance. He preached there again on the 17th, when the wicked pelted him with rotten eggs, and greatly disturbed the peaceable part of the people. He went there again on the 24th, when the persecutors became furious; they threw down the fence of a garden, and broke in pieces the stool upon which Mr. Wallis stood, and rendered preaching impossible.

At many other places similar opposition presented itself, and the missionaries required no ordinary courage and zeal to continue their labours. The circuit report for March, 1836, says, "Andover mission has still to contend with determined opposition.

Some of the members have been greatly oppressed; six of them have been imprisoned for only standing on some waste land to hear a sermon!" In consequence of this imprisonment, and of other severe persecutions, some of the weaker-minded persons who had united with the societies became faint-hearted and withdrew. The Lord, however, blessed the labours of his servants; sinners were brought to God under their ministry, and the churches increased in number. In March, 1837, they had acquired such stability and strength that the Andover mission was made into a separate circuit, containing 340 members, and four travelling preachers. During the ensuing year the prejudices of many of the inhabitants abated, the societies grew in grace, and realized a net increase of thirty members. In the next succeeding year they also made a little advancement, and erected two connexional chapels. In 1840 the members of society had risen to 410. In this rapid sketch of the rise and progress of Primitive Methodism in Andover and the vicinity many deeply interesting facts are omitted, partly for lack of space, and partly for lack of sufficient information concerning them; but as much is recorded illustrative of the triumphs of Divine grace and the blessings attendant on zealous and persevering efforts to enlighten and regenerate fallen humanity as ought to stimulate christian readers to increased activity and zeal in godlike attempts to turn sinners from the error of their ways, and snatch them as brands from the burning.

The neighbouring mission station in the same county will afford additional facts illustrative of the deplorable ignorance and wickedness of the inhabitants, and of the success of the gospel in their enlightenment and conversion. We have previously intimated that invitations were given to one of the missionaries to visit places in the neighbourhoods of Basingstoke and Winchester, and have related how the missionaries were sent to Mitcheldever. We shall now record the manner in which the missionaries were received at various places, and the success with which the Lord was graciously pleased to crown their labours.

Mitcheldever is a large village six miles from the ancient city of Winchester, containing from 1000 to 1200 inhabitants. "In the winter of 1833-4," says Mr. Bishop, "we had a blessed work of God in this place, and the society numbered nearly *one hundred* members. The down on which the Winchester race-course runs lies about mid-way between Winchester and Mitcheldever. On this extensive down we held a camp-meeting on Sunday, May 25th, 1834. Within a circle of a few miles there is a considerable number of villages, in several of which we had been most violently opposed, and in which we had not as yet been able to effect an an establishment. It was expected that multitudes of persecutors from these places would be present at the camp-meeting; and such were the apprehensions of our people, who well knew the temper and character of the inhabitants, that, for weeks previous to the Sabbath on which the meeting was held, their anxieties and prayers were chiefly concerning it. It constituted the all-engrossing subject of their conversation, and occasioned alternate fears and hopes. No farmer could be prevailed upon to lend us either waggon or cart for a pulpit. But when the appointed day arrived our friends met in the name of the Lord; and while we were engaged in the open prayer-meeting a splendid spring-van approached from the direction of Winchester. This belonged to a Mr. Topp, who then resided in the city. He was a spirited man, independent of favours and fearless of frowns. Having by some means learned how we were likely to be circumstanced, he determined that we should not be destitute of a pulpit, and therefore brought this beautiful van, which had a high tilt, and when the tarpauling covering was loosened on one side and turned back over the top, it formed the most agreeable and convenient camp-meeting pulpit I ever stood in. By ten o'clock we had a large congregation, composed principally, however, of our own friends. About this time another waggon arrived on the ground, which was also followed by a cart, in the same service. Mr. Topp had brought in his waggon a good supply of bread, cheese, and beef; and at dinner time gave a general invitation to all present to



partake of his bounty. Very different, however, were the contents of the other waggon and cart; and equally opposite were the principles and objects of their proprietors. These two vehicles were laden with barrels of beer, &c., which the parties placed and tapped close by the spot on which we had commenced our meeting. The weather was very warm, and the presence of this inflammable material greatly increased the anxiety we all felt in reference to the results of the day. But as comparatively few besides our own friends were present, the morning services were concluded without any interruption, and were marked by much gracious influence. God in an eminent manner was in the singing, praying, and preaching, and the people were filled with faith and with the Holy Ghost.

"Dinner was very soon despatched, and the societies from the various villages were severally grouped together and engaged in prayer. It was delightful to witness this. While these prayer-meetings were proceeding we decided to remove our locomotive pulpit about half-a-mile across the down, to avoid immediate collision with the beer-sellers. As two o'clock P.M. approached the people began to arrive from all the neighbourhood around, and great numbers from the city of Winchester. Probably there were present at one time in the afternoon from 5000 to 6000 persons: and not fewer than 3000 of them belonged to the ranks of our most violent persecutors. It was now that interruption, and even danger were apprehended. A deep solemnity pervaded the hearts of our people, and this gave a character to all the religious exercises, especially to the preaching and praying. The Mitcheldever society constituted one of the praying companies; and its members prayed until it seemed as if heaven and earth were brought together. At first I trembled lest their fervency should enrage the persecutors; but there was no remedy; it was impossible to restrain them. I then joined with them, and felt perfectly free to live or die; and, contrary to our expectation, when we returned to the preaching stand for the second course of sermons, the vast concourse of people stood as if they were



entranced; the preachers had extraordinary liberty, and the word was indeed with power; the people in prayer wrestled with God and prevailed, and the song of praise seemed to make the place a paradise. The entire day's services were brought to a close in peace; and the impressions made were unquestionably such as never will be forgotten by the multitudes who were present on that memorable day.

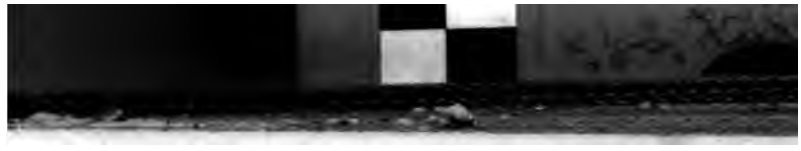
"This powerful meeting gave a mighty impetus to 'the kingdom of heaven' in the county of Hants. The infant churches, which had been recently planted in the various surrounding villages, were greatly invigorated; while the hard moral soil of those neighbourhoods, which had hitherto violently resisted our entrance into them, and which was so much in harmony with the *flinty* character of the *material* soil of the same localities, was, in several instances, softened into 'good ground,' to receive the 'good seed' of 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God.'"

But now another form of opposition presented itself. An attempt was made, under the pretence of the law, to arrest the progress of the missionaries by putting down their open-air preaching, an object which *brute force* had failed to accomplish. Messrs. Ride and Bishop were appointed by Shefford circuit to attend the quarterly meeting of Mitcheldever branch, to be held at Mitcheldever, on Tuesday, June 3rd, 1834, and to address a missionary meeting in the evening. "As we had only cottages to preach in at this place," says Mr. Bishop, "we were compelled, for want of room, to hold the missionary meeting in the open-air. Indeed we usually held our ordinary preaching services out of doors here in the summer, the congregations being too large to be crowded into any dwelling-house. On this occasion it was found that a written notice had been affixed to a cottage near the open space of waste ground on which we were accustomed to worship God, the purport of which was to forbid us worshipping there again, under the threat of legal proceedings. Information of this notice was given by some of our friends at the quarterly meeting, which occasioned serious deliberation and earnest prayer,

and these resulted in the unanimous decision that it was our duty to hold the meeting in the open-air as appointed, and patiently suffer whatever consequences might follow. After much prayer we proceeded to the place, where we had a large assembly of people who conducted themselves peaceably, and complied with our directions to stand so as not to obstruct the thoroughfare. An officious policeman, of the name of Ellery, was present, who demanded our names, and conducted himself in such a manner as was calculated to induce thoughtless young men and boys to interrupt the meeting; but, happily, none of them took any part with him. Mr. Ride and I addressed the people, keeping to the subject of missions, making no reflections on the policeman's behaviour, and the meeting closed in a peaceable and orderly manner. Shortly afterwards a summons reached us, under the hand and seal of Sir Thomas Baring, Bart., of Stratton Park. This legal instrument charged John Ride and Edward Bishop,—*on the oath of Thomas Ellery, with leading and heading a riotous mob at Mitcheldever,—with being armed with bludgeons, and that they did by force and arms put His Majesty's peaceful subjects in fear,—that they obstructed the thoroughfare,—and that they were a nuisance.*

"To understand the malice which attempted to connect us with *rioting* and *mobbing*, it will be necessary to remember that this county was the scene of much disturbance about the years 1832-3. Large bodies of agricultural labourers, armed with strange and terror-inspiring weapons, gathered together, and proceeded through various parts of it, putting their employers in fear, and breaking the thrashing machines into pieces wherever they found them; and incendiary fires were seen blazing at night with fearful frequency. We could not, therefore, have been charged with crimes more calculated to awaken the strongest prejudice of all parties against us, and especially that of the upper classes.

"On Saturday, July 19th, 1834, we met the magistrates at Winchester, in obedience to the summons. Upon investigation it was found that we had held a *religious service*, instead of having headed a *riotous mob*, and we ought, therefore, to have



been discharged, and our prosecutors made to bear our expenses; but this would have effectually defeated the object sought to be acomplished, namely, the prevention of our open-air religious worship. We were, therefore, told that our prosecutors had no wish to punish us, and that if we would only promise not to preach in the open-air at Mitcheldever again we should be at liberty to return home. We replied that as to punishment we must first be convicted of crime, before it could be inflicted; and as to liberty, we demanded it, as no crime had been proved against us. We were licensed preachers; we had preached on waste ground; had obstructed no thoroughfare; we had a perfectly legal right to do what we had done, and this right we could not relinquish on any consideration. Finding us firm to our purpose we were detained; and, after a while, a gentleman came to persuade us that we were acting a foolish part in not complying with the requirement of the magistrates, to promise that we would not preach in Mitcheldever street again. But we saw clearly that if we made such a promise in reference to Mitcheldever, the same course would be taken at other places, and we should be crippled in our missionary efforts, and we therefore refused to make the required promise. The bench detained us until all the proper business was done, and then, finding us unmoved, made out our commitment to prison, repeating it in all the *outrageous untruths* contained in the summons.

"We were then consigned to the care of the jailor, and, after the fatigue of a journey of thirty-two miles on a sultry July day, were sent supperless to our straw pallets in our solitary cells. The next day was the Sabbath; and, after being supplied with our bread and water, we were informed that there would be divine service in the prison chapel, and that we might attend if we would engage not to make any interruption by giving expression to emotions! Alas! there was little in the service to excite emotion, except the sight of prostrate humanity, which was calculated to move our compassion. We remained in prison until legal advice had been properly taken, and were then liberated on our own

recognizances, August 1st, 1834,—an ever memorable day in the annals of Great Britain,—being honoured by the termination of slavery in our West India colonies.

"We made the necessary preparations to meet the case at the next Quarter Sessions for the county, when we appeared again at Winchester, accompanied by nearly thirty witnesses—not a third of what we could have taken, had they been necessary for our defence. When we got into court considerable effort was made on the part of the prosecutors to prevent the case being opened; but we demanded to be openly justified or condemned. The prosecutors' counsel therefore proceeded to open the case, and, after his speech, called up his principle witness,—Thomas Ellery, the policeman. This unhappy man, with his usual effrontery and wickedness, repeated on oath all the false depositions on which the summons had been granted by Sir Thomas Baring, Bart., and upon which our commitment had been made out by the magistrates; but this was done with such a spirit of levity and profanity, that, even before his cross-examination, every sensible mind in the crowded court must have been satisfied that no reliance could be placed on his evidence, and that the prosecutors' case was lost. If, however, any doubt remained as to the untruthfulness of Thomas Ellery's statements, it was most effectually dispelled when our counsel sifted his depositions, exposing, not only their falsehood, but also the true character of the dark spirit which animated them; and, moreover, convicted him on his own confession of false-swearing in that court on a previous occasion. It was now clearly seen that it was impossible for our prosecutors to obtain a verdict against us. Nearly all the magistrates withdrew, leaving the chairman of the sessions almost alone on the bench; and we were intreated by the presiding magistrate himself, as well as by many other gentlemen present, not to press the case on to a verdict of the jury. It therefore became a question whether we should more fully sustain the proper character of 'ambassadors for Christ,' and promote the 'free course of his glorious gospel' in the county, by insisting upon proceeding with



the case, or by complying with the repeated and urgent request of the court, not to press it to the verdict of the jury. Our character and mission had been made known to the magistracy and gentry of the county as they had never been before; we had been effectually defended against the malicious imputations of riotous and disorderly proceedings; our opponents had been completely defeated in their attempts under form of law to hinder us from prosecuting our great work; our witnesses, who were principally labouring men, had not yet been brought into collission with their employers, and, although their love to us, begotten in them by the spiritual good they had received through our ministry would have constrained them to risk their employment to bear a truthful evidence in our defence, yet, if the collision and risk could be safely avoided, it seemed in the circumstances desirable; and, although there remained the serious question of the expenses, there was yet the still more serious question of sustaining the true consistency of our character as the 'disciples' and 'servants of our Lord Jesus Christ,' and that of promoting the one great object of our mission—to preach his peaceful gospel in the city, towns, villages, and hamlets of Hampshire. Taking all these circumstances into our consideration we reached the conclusion, that, with a repetition in the open court of our protestation that we were innocent of the violation of any law of our country, it would be the best course to comply with the desire of the court, so earnestly and respectfully expressed; and the experience of the results for twenty-five years, only confirms our views of the correctness of our decision.

"Previous to this trial we could seldom obtain a conviction against our persecutors, however outrageous were the circumstances of the case. Besides the barbarous treatment of our missionaries previously recorded, poor men, who opened their cottages for our religious services, had not only had their windows broken, but the windows and doors actually torn out; and when the guilty parties were summoned before the magistrates, the sufferers had been unable to obtain redress,—and had afterwards

not unfrequently been subjected to greater injuries from the persecutors, who were encouraged by the issue of these fruitless appeals to the protection which the laws of our country, when righteously administered, afford to the humblest subject of the realm. After the trial at Winchester we found less difficulty in obtaining proper redress.

"The imprisonment was also the occasion of 'much prayer being made to God for us' by thousands of our people in Berkshire, Wiltshire, and other counties, as well as by our friends in Hampshire, who were more immediately concerned in the issue of the trial; and in this way the matter proved indirectly a blessing to our societies. At Newbury, in Berkshire, our friends spent a whole night in prayer, while we lay in prison: and there are now living some who were so spiritually benefited on the occasion, that they rejoice in the recollection of that night until this day.

"To ourselves also it was a season of no small profit. In the circumstances in which we were then prosecuting our labours, we found it all but impossible to 'enter into a closet,' for the purposes of private devotion; and a peaceful opportunity for reading, thoughtful meditation, writing, or prayer, could rarely be secured. The road, the field, the down, the wood, were amongst the best available substitutes for a study; and the Bible, with a very limited supply of other books, constituted our portable travelling library. The regularity with which we could read and pray, and think and write, day after day, in our prison college, was as novel to us as it was advantageous. The Rev. William Thorn, Independent minister, of Winchester, who had from the first taken a great interest in our work, very soon found us in our stronghold, not being ashamed to identify himself with us when we were suffering as evildoers, even unto bonds, and when a powerful attempt was being made to associate our names and labours with the names and crimes of the most detested characters of the time and district. He visited us frequently, and kindly offered us the free use of any books in his library. The fortnight we spent in that county jail was the best portion of college life with which we



had ever been favoured. We have still manuscript sermons which were written there.

. "The part of the prison in which we were confined was prepared for the reception of smugglers, and was called 'The Smugglers' Yard.' It consisted of a large room to live in by day, a range of cells for sleeping in, and an open yard of considerable size, within the prison walls, which we found very convenient for exercise and beneficial to our health. Since 1834 the county has erected a new and extensive model prison upon an eminence on one side of the city, and sold the county jail in which we were incarcerated. For the convenience of sale it was divided into lots, one of which was purchased by the Independents of Winchester for a site on which to build a chapel, and this very lot contained 'The Smugglers' Yard.' It is to us an interesting fact that on the very spot where, as 'prisoners of Jesus Christ,' we had offered up much earnest prayer, and which we regarded as a kind of 'holy ground,' the Rev. William Thorn and his church have erected a splendid sanctuary, with a suite of school-rooms for boys, girls, and infants, and houses for the teachers and the chapel-keeper."

The trial at Winchester which we have recorded rather lengthily proved beneficial to the missionary operations then conducted in the county, and we find the cause making some advancement during the same year. In March, 1835, Mitcheldever branch reported an increase of sixty members for the year, and was then made into a separate circuit with 269 members. But much trial and persecution still awaited the societies, and in March, 1836, we find the number of members reduced to 200. The year following there was an increase of forty. From the circuit report we learn that the opposition with which the brethren had still to contend was very severe. They had to preach out of doors at nearly half the places even in Winter, being unable to obtain houses in which to hold their services, through the opposition of landlords. They say, "Persecution last spring and summer ran awfully high; some of our preachers narrowly escaped with their lives." They had, however, succeeded in raising several

new societies, and were encouraged to attempt the establishment of preaching in the ancient city of Winchester, and at several of the adjacent villages. Sunday, April 16th, 1837, was the commencement of their missionary labours in the city. Messrs. Bishop, Watts, Guy, Merritt, and others attended on the occasion. In the morning there was a considerable fall of snow, but the zealous brethren, nevertheless, commenced service at a quarter past nine in an open space in the midst of the city. They were soon surrounded by a number of ill-dressed, ill-looking, and disorderly characters, evidently bent on mischief; and it was in the midst of considerable interruptions that Mr. Merritt preached a short sermon. Apprehending more serious disturbance in the afternoon and evening, the brethren made known their case to the Rev. W. Thorn, whose chapel they attended after their own service, and he generously promised to render what aid he could. Through his influence the police attended the afternoon and evening services, and prevented violence; still many small stones were thrown at the brethren, and many rushes were made at the officiating preacher in order to get him down, which was nearly effected several times. A large assembly was convened at the last service, partly composed of respectable and attentive hearers; but the preparation made by the ungodly for a violent assault led the preachers to conclude the service in little above half an hour, when the mob made a rush on every side, and caused a fearful uproar. "We now attempted to return home," says Mr. Bishop, "but we were followed through the streets by hundreds, leaping, dancing, hissing, shouting, swearing, running, rushing, and throwing flints, making a complete riot. The whole scene, whether in a religious, moral, or civil point of view, was really awful." The preachers called upon two friends, whose houses were at once beset by the mob; and when the preachers came out, they were followed as before. Fearing for their safety, some persons urged them to seek shelter in a chapel in Hyde Street, and after much entreaty they did so. But knowing that their danger would be increased if they remained to the close of the service, they made their escape back-



way. The mob soon got knowledge of it, and pursued them with augmented violence. Not venturing to proceed under such perilous circumstances, they returned into the city, in doing which they were struck several times by flint stones. Three policemen now undertook to conduct them, and they proceeded on the public road towards their respective homes, the mob still following them. When the policemen had accompanied them nearly two miles they returned. The mob then assailed the preachers in a furious manner, throwing flint stones and other hard materials at them with great violence; and they only escaped from their hands by passing through the park-gate of a magistrate, upon whom they waited, and made known their situation to him. He treated them courteously, and offered to go with them to the mob, if they thought his presence would be of any service; but they preferred having permission to cross his park in a certain direction, which was readily granted, and they thereby escaped in safety. During the week three of the leaders of the mob were brought before the migistrates; the police appeared as witnesses against them, and they were all fined. On this occasion both magistrates and the police consistently strove to maintain law and order; and the presiding magistrate testified his belief of the preachers' upright intentions, and kindly gave them good advice. This administration of justice appears to have exerted a salutary influence upon the persecutors at Winchester, for Mr. G. Watts preached there on the 23rd to hundreds of attentive hearers, and without interruption. Mr. Bishop preached there on the 14th of May, and obtained a tolerably good hearing; the persecutors being restrained through fear of the magistrates. On the 16th of June Mr. Watts preached there, and formed a society of five members. No permanent establishment, however, was effected at that time, and the services were discontinued for several years. A second and successful attempt to obtain a footing in this city will be noticed in a subsequent chapter.

Alresford, a small town about seven miles from Winchester, was a place into which the missionaries endeavoured to effect an

entrance in the spring of 1838. On Sunday afternoon, April 15th, Mr. G. Watts stood up in an open space about the centre of the town, when numbers flocked around him. Some of the wicked did all they could to prevent his preaching; but certain members of the Independents rendered him timely and kind assistance, and some of his congregation listened to him with attention. On the evening of the 20th he preached again in the streets; but a drum and fife were brought to create disturbance, and the mob became so outgrageous that it was with difficulty Mr. Watts escaped into a house, where he found shelter, and met with a kind reception. On the 4th of May he visited the place again. Having ascertained that his persecutors had filled an engine in order to assail him he prudently adopted the plan of preaching earlier than usual, and in a different part of the town, by which means he escaped the ill-usage intended for him, and was happy to address a peaceable congregation: and a bigoted church-woman, who had refused to live with her husband because some of their children had become dissenters, listened attentively, and was so impressed with the truth that on the following Sabbath she attended the Independent chapel. But on his next visit to the town, on Sunday, May 13th, he was less successful. Though on the Lord's-day his godless and brutal persecutors had prepared for him six dozen of rotten eggs, a tub of coal tar, and two bundles of rods. On his approaching the place where he intended to preach they hailed him with shouts of rage and madness. He called at a friend's house, which was instantly beset by the mob, and to escape their violence he was obliged to conceal himself; they broke the windows, and covered one of the room floors with eggs. When many of them had gone to church (!), Mr. Watts made his escape, but was followed by numbers who stoned him more than a mile.

Such were some of the church-going inhabitants of Alresford. But they were to be pitied as well as blamed; their religious instructors, it is to be feared, knew nothing of evangelical religion, and were therefore incompetent to teach those salutary truths,



which, through the divine blessing, might have civilized and regenerated these half-savage and brutal persecutors. The following instance will illustrate the lordly and tyrannical conduct of a clergyman in the same county towards his hapless dependents. The missionaries visited the place which had the misfortune to be wholly under his power, and he threatened to prosecute them as "rogues and vagabonds." But probably learning from some proper source that this would prove unsuccessful, he had recourse to another expedient. Mr. Watts was preaching at the place when the reverend gentleman made his appearance, and ordered the people "to go into their houses and shut their doors and windows!" Trembling lest they should be turned out of their dwellings and deprived of their employment these oppressed peasants obeyed his mandate, and he had the satisfaction of seeing how complete was his tyrannical control over them. Such was the civil and religious liberty where this successor of the apostles reigned supreme.

Other persecutors were of another character. On the 26th of August 1837, Mr. Watts appeared at the grand jury chamber, in Winchester, to answer to the complaint of Thomas Parker, farmer, who said that "George Watts assembled with a large and tumultuous concourse of persons at the parish of Martyr's Worthy, and then and there, in a riotous manner, by his proceedings annoyed Her Majesty's liege subjects; and that the said Thomas Parker, in riding by the said George Watts, was nearly thrown from his horse, and might have been seriously injured, had it not been for the interference of Richard Dover." The parties named were bitter persecutors, and had been so determined to arrest the progress of the missionaries that they had taken out no fewer than five or six summonses and two warrants against Mr. Watts and two of his brethren. On the occasion referred to in the extraordinary complaint just cited, these parties had actually furnished a number of wicked boys in the parish with tin horns for the purpose of creating a disturbance. The whole affair was so disgraceful, and the wicked, but ill-managed plot so evident that the magistrates



told Dover, that if he had been the defendant instead of the preacher they could have sent him to jail.

Long and fierce was the conflict which the missionaries had to sustain in many parts of Hampshire. After some years patient endurance of almost incredible persecutions and sufferings, and when the most respectable magistrates had become favourable to their operations, they were bitterly opposed in a variety of ways. "The adversary does not give up the contest," says Mr. Bishop. "He is still working though his emissaries by almost every possible means not cognizable by the laws of the land. Some slander us, some oppress our people, some write and print against us, and circulate tracts and handbills to oppose us. Some even instruct the ungodly that they have as much right to make a noise in the streets and wastes as we have to preach and pray. When we seek to obtain houses to preach in, to form societies, and to hold prayer-meetings, the opposition becomes more serious. Employers and landlords are used by the enemy as the instruments of vengeance, and the result too frequently is that we are obliged to preach out of doors both summer and winter for years, without reaping the fruit of our labours. While the suffering is confined to ourselves we persevere and succeed: when the people come to suffer with us we often fail to accomplish our full object. Still we persevere in preaching the truth in streets, lanes, fields, highways, and hedges; though the adversary keeps up the contest with a spirit and energy, and by diversified means and instruments really astonishing. But the battle is the Lord's; and our work is with him, and our record is on high."

In the spring of 1839 the prospect had become much more cheering. In the circuit report it is said, "The circuit is prosperous. Persecution is abating, villages are opening before us, the work of conversion is advancing, our members are increasing, fresh labourers are rising up, and we have built one chapel." The following year was also one of progress, the number of members reported to the conference of 1840 being 320.

Leaving Hampshire, we now proceed to record other missionary



operations of Shefford circuit. In March, 1835, this circuit was in a very prosperous state. Preaching was established at 267 places, 22 chapels were occupied, 23 travelling preachers were employed, 167 local preachers were approved, and the societies numbered 2,280 members; the increase for the year being 521. At the quarterly meeting in that month it was resolved to enlarge the borders of the circuit in Berkshire; and the important town of Reading was chosen as the centre of fresh missionary labours. The zeal and energy displayed in this enterprise may be inferred from the fact that no fewer than three missionaries were at once appointed to be employed therein, namely, Messrs. Ride, Jackson, and Cummin, and that the earnest prayers of the numerous societies were enlisted in their behalf. No delay was suffered to take place in carrying the purpose into effect. On the 12th of April, a day's open-air services were held in a large open place called the Forbury Hill, in the outskirts of Reading. A number of zealous friends from several places in Shefford circuit attended, to assist in the services and encourage the missionaries in their onerous duties. Mr. Ride and Mr. Kirby, a local preacher, spoke in the morning to a large audience; Mr. Bishop preached in the afternoon to a large assembly, and much divine influence attended the word; and Mrs. Ride preached in the evening to a still larger audience. A favourable impression was made upon many minds, several were convinced of sin, the prospect of success appeared very cheering, and regular services were thenceforward held in Reading. It was afterwards ascertained that one soul, at least, was brought to God under each sermon preached on the day just named; and one of the converts provided bed and board for a missionary free of expense for many years.

But the missionaries did not confine their labours to the town, they visited most of the villages within a reasonable distance, and preached in the open-air wherever they could collect a congregation. From the journal of Messrs. Ride and Jackson, published in the denominational magazine, we learn that they preached at Englefield, Burghfield, Ufton Green, Swallowfield, Beechhill, Oak-

field Common, Soak, Mortimer, Caversham, Sonning, Play Hatch, Enmore Green, Maiden Earley, Lower Earley, Finchampstead, Lawrence Waltham, Grayley, Round Oak, Silchester, West End, Shinfield, Arbofield, Tilehurst, and other places. At many of these places they met with encouraging success, and flourishing societies were in due time established. At others they were less successful, and encountered considerable opposition. They were not, however, to be intimidated by a trifle. The ease with which Mr. Ride could receive threatenings of being apprehended was apparent on his visit to Englefield, on Sunday morning, May 3rd, 1835. On arriving at the place, in company with a few friends, a gentleman, suspecting Mr. Ride's design, inquired, "Are you going to hold forth this morning?" Mr. R. replied that such was his intention. The gentleman then said, "I forbid you preaching here; and if you are not off immediately I will send for the constable." To this blustering threat Mr. R. calmly replied, "Sir, I have had a constable sent to me before to-day, on such occasions as this; if you will send for one he will be very serviceable in preventing rude boys from interrupting us." This was such an answer as the gentleman had probably not expected, and he went at once to the constable, who, as soon as Mr. Ride had begun the service, came and said, "Sir, I come to forbid you preaching here." Mr. Ride informed him that if he would wait till he had concluded the service he would converse with him on the subject. The constable then asked for his name, and frankly saying, "I do not know whether you have any right to preach here or not, but if you have not you may expect to hear of it another day," went his way, leaving the preacher perfectly unconcerned whether he should hear of it another day or otherwise. Encounters like this were simply amusing to the veteran missionary, who had been trained in the school of persecution, and who had more than once endured bonds or imprisonments for Christ's sake. In the Reading mission, however, persecution did not rage so fiercely as it had done in many other parts of Berkshire and in the neighbouring counties of Hampshire and Oxfordshire, the magistrates generally being

more favourable to the missionaries. But for a time prejudice prevented many of the labouring population from hearing the preachers; and others were kept from attending their services through being threatened with the loss of their employment, should they go to hear them. Despite of this prejudice and opposition the missionaries persevered in their zealous labours; increasing numbers listened to their plain and earnest addresses, prejudice gradually weakened, Divine light dawned upon hundreds of benighted minds, many penitently sought pardoning mercy and regenerating grace, and were made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

In the town a commodious chapel was taken on rent, in London-street, and was opened for Divine worship on the 11th of October. Large congregations attended this sanctuary, and an earnest society flourished in it, numbering about seventy members in March, 1836. Mr. J. Woodward, a pious young preacher, was afflicted thirteen weeks, and then died in the Lord; and another of the missionaries was ill seventeen weeks, which caused additional expense to the mission, and somewhat retarded its progress; but the societies liberally contributed towards the expenses according to their ability, and took commendable care of the afflicted preachers. The number of members increased rapidly, notwithstanding the difficulties and the discouragements with which the missionaries had to contend. At the June quarterly meeting the number in society was thirty-three; at September meeting, 100; at December, 150; and in March, 1836, no fewer than 300. In the circuit report this prosperity was attributed, under God, partly to the united and laborious exertions of the missionaries, and partly to the earnest prayers and faith of the members in the circuit generally,—a proper and scriptural manner of accounting for this great success.

The ensuing year was also one of encouraging prosperity. We are unable to enter into details; but at the March quarterly meeting of Shefford circuit the number of members in Reading mission had become 450, and the societies were judged to be

sufficiently established to be formed into a separate circuit. According to their request they were formed into Reading circuit, Messrs. Ride, Guy, Wiltshire, and A. Bell being appointed to labour among them. Thus another flourishing circuit was raised up in the course of two years by the blessing of God upon the labours of the missionaries belonging to Shefford circuit. The progress and missionary enterprises of this new circuit merit a record: but we must first detail missionary labours and successes of Shefford circuit in two other stations.

In the spring of 1836, a year after the commencement of Reading mission, Shefford circuit undertook a mission to Aylesbury, in Buckinghamshire. Messrs. G. Price and J. Jefferies were the first missionaries who visited this town and district. They and Mr. H. Heys walked twenty-five miles thither on Saturday, March 26th, and they commenced their labours on the following day by preaching in the open-air to large and attentive congregations: Mr. Heys preached twice and Mr. Price once. The next day Mr. Heys returned, and Messrs. Price and Jefferies went to the village of Dinton, four miles from Aylesbury, where they preached in the open-air to a large assembly, notwithstanding it rained hard during the time. At this village they soon witnessed some fruit of their labours; several persons began to seek the Lord, and here they formed the first society which they had established in the country. Among the numerous places at which they preached were Wing, Wingrave, Wendover, Weedon, Weston Turville, Whitchurch, Hardwick, Watton, Cublington, Aston Abbotts, Grandborough, Kingsbury, Quainton, North Marston, Wiggington, Ledbury, Longwick, and Haddenham. They frequently preached four times in the open-air on the Lord's-day, besides walking a number of miles. A few instances shall be given. On Sunday, April 10th, Mr. Price preached at Wingrave at ten o'clock, at Weedon at half-past one, at Whitchurch at half-past four, and at Hardwick at half-past six, each time in the open-air. On the 8th of May he preached at the same places, and at night remarked, "This has been a day of labour; I have



preached four times in the open-air, led a prayer-meeting, prayed with seven families, and walked seventeen miles." On Sunday, May 1st, Mr. Jefferies preached at Wingrave at nine o'clock, at Weedon at half-past one, at Whitchurch at half-past four, and at Hardwick at six. On the 29th he preached again at all the same places, and conducted a prayer-meeting at one of them. On the following Sunday he preached at Wingrave, Weedon, Aylesbury, and Hardwick. He also formed a class at Hardwick, prayed with several families, and walked nineteen miles. No wonder that at the close he felt "very much fatigued." At most of the places the missionaries visited attentive congregations listened to their earnest preaching, and religious impressions were made upon many minds. Such was the encouraging prospect of success which the mission presented at the June quarterly meeting of the circuit that another missionary, Mr. W. Harvey, was sent to assist in enlarging its borders. He also toiled hard like his brethren in endeavouring to strengthen and extend the mission. During the week beginning with July 17th, 1836, he preached nine times, led three classes, attended five prayer-meetings, and visited about fifty families. On Sunday, August 28th, he led four classes, attended two prayer-meetings, and preached three times in the open-air. The missionaries in this district do not appear to have encountered much persecution; but their discouragements and toils were great, and their privations and hardships not a few. The blessing of God, however, attended their labours, and they soon succeeded in establishing societies at Aylesbury, Weedon, Aston Abbotts, Wingrave, Wing, Whitchurch, North Marston, and other places. In 1837 they extended their labours to Stewkley and Standbridge, where their ministry was rendered a blessing to many souls, and flourishing societies were formed. In the course of about two years upwards of 200 members were gathered into church-fellowship on this mission, and an entrance was effected into the town of Leighton Buzzard, in Bedfordshire, and several adjacent villages, where some small societies were formed.

The good work thus auspiciously begun in this mission pro-

gressed with undiminished rapidity. Mr. Samuel Turner was one of the preachers appointed thereto in July, 1838; and we learn from a letter of his, published in the connexional magazine, that a chapel was taken on rent at Aylesbury, and opened for worship on Sunday, December 23rd, 1838. At North Marston, a village about seven miles from Aylesbury, a number of conversions were effected, and in due time a new chapel was erected, which was opened in November, 1839. A new chapel was also opened at Stewkley, in October 1839, and one was soon afterwards taken on rent at Aston Abbotts. The good work also prospered at several places in Bedfordshire. At Eggington, a small village three miles from Leighton Buzzard, many persons were converted; at Toddington, a large village, scores were convinced of sin, and nearly forty were made happy in the pardoning love of God.

The increase of members on the mission for the year was 130. Encouraged by this prosperity the March quarterly meeting of 1839 determined to send Mr. H. Higginson on a mission to Dunstable, Luton, and other places in the vicinity. Accompanied by Mr. S. Turner, who went to assist him for the first week, he repaired to the scene of his labours in April, 1839. On the 21st of that month they opened their mission at Houghton Regis, a large village, by singing up the streets, after which a sermon was preached by another brother. In the afternoon Mr. Higginson preached in the open-air at Dunstable, and Mr. Turner delivered an address. They then proceeded five miles further to Luton, and Mr. Turner preached at the market-house, and Mr. Higginson gave an address. During the week they visited Market-street, Kensworth, Caddington, and Chorlton, and preached at each place.

On the following Sabbath Mr. Higginson preached in the morning at Houghton Regis, and formed a society of four members. In the afternoon he preached at Dunstable, and in the evening to a large assembly at the market-hall at Luton. In this town he found kind friends in Mr. and Mrs. Higgins, who hospitably entertained him, and, though members of another com-



munity, rendered valuable assistance to the infant cause. The good work soon began to prosper, a flourishing society was raised in a short time, and a new chapel was erected in the most needy part of the town, and opened for Divine worship on the 14th of November, 1839, within seven months from the first sermon being delivered by the missionaries.

At Dunstable Mr. Higginson was less successful, and no permanent establishment was effected there till many years afterwards. Nor were his labours long continued at Luton, or in the neighbourhood; when he had been there about two months he caught a fever through visiting some sick persons. This was followed by the ague, and he was reduced to great feebleness. The work of God, however, continued to prosper both at Luton and in other parts of Aylesbury branch. At the December quarterly meeting of 1839, the branch was made into a separate circuit. About the same period it ventured to take under its fostering care Buckingham mission, commenced some time before by Congleton circuit. This mission had never been very prosperous, and was then in a very feeble state; it contained very few members, and its maintenance seemed likely to prove an expensive affair to the new circuit. But the Lord blessed the labours of his servants, numerous conversions took place in many places, all financial demands were met, and 500 members were reported to the ensuing conference. So graciously did the Lord crown the zealous and self-denying labours of the missionaries in this district.

Before we close our narrative of the missionary enterprizes of Shefford circuit we must briefly record the commencement and progress of Marlborough mission, in the north-eastern extremity of Wiltshire. At the March quarterly meeting of 1838, Mr. W. Bell was appointed to enter upon this mission. Five years previously an attempt had been made to establish a cause in this town; but the persecution was so violent, and the difficulty of "supplying it regularly with travelling preachers" being then insurmountable, the place was abandoned. It was now resolved

to make another attempt, and Mr. Bell went to the place in the true spirit of a christian missionary, willing to suffer as well as to labour in the cause of his Divine Master. He began by preaching in the open-air, when the old spirit of persecution manifested itself: a number of persons cursed him bitterly, and pushed him off the stool on which he was standing. The following Sabbath, while Mr. Cruse, a local preacher, was preaching a policeman seized him, and locked him up in the "blind house." He was, however, soon released from his dismal abode. The missionary continued to labour in this persecuting town, and succeeded in establishing a small society.

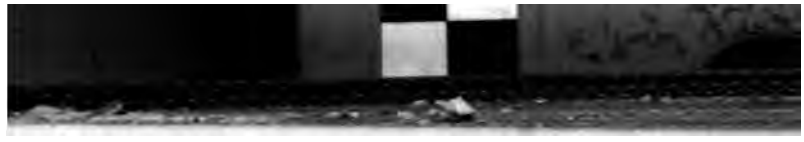
At Pewsey, a small town notorious for wickedness, Mr. Bell preached in the open-air in the midst of such horrid noises made by persecutors that he could scarcely be heard, and when he had done the mob followed him, and pelted him with stones and clods of dirt. He, however, continued to visit the town, and succeeded in obtaining a place to preach in, and in forming a society.

At Woodborough he and others preached in the open-air nine months without being able to obtain a house to preach in. Several persons, however, obtained spiritual good under their ministry, a society of fifteen members was formed, and several who durst not open their houses for preaching offered them for prayer-meetings.

At Huish Mr. Bell met with grievous persecution when he first preached there on the 28th of March, 1838; and the fortnight following the persecutors threw so many squibs or crackers among the people who were hearing him that he was obliged to close the service abruptly. He, however, succeeded in time in obtaining a house to preach in near the village, in which a flourishing society was established.

At the small village of Stowel a considerable number of persons attended the preaching of the missionary, and several very ungodly characters were turned to the Lord.

At Savernake Park various denominations had attempted in vain to establish a cause, but through the blessing of God on the labours of Mr. Bell and his brethren a large congregation was



collected, and many persons began to inquire what they must do to be saved.

Good was effected at other places, and in March, 1839, a hundred members were reported for the mission. Four places belonging to the circuit were then annexed to the mission, a second preacher was appointed to labour thereon, and thirty-four places were regularly visited.

Mr. H. Higginson having recovered from the severe illness mentioned in the preceding page, removed to Marlborough in July, 1839, and, through the Divine blessing on his zealous labours, was made instrumental in building up and strengthening the societies, despite of much persecution and opposition. At Little Bodding on one occasion no less than *seventeen* policemen were sent to prevent his preaching! On the following Tuesday evening three others interrupted him at Marlborough. These encounters, however, were probably overruled for good, and rendered tributary to the prosperity of the societies. The good work progressed during the year, and in March, 1840, the mission was made into a separate circuit, with two travelling preachers and 276 members.

In some preceding pages we narrated the commencement of Reading mission, and its progress till March, 1837, when it was made into an independent station. We now proceed to record its progress till 1840. During the first year of this new circuit's history it had to contend with great discouragements and formidable opposition. "An outrageous case of persecution" cost the enormous sum of £150! But the friends persevered in their self-denying labours despite of all opposition and discouragements, and realised an increase of fifty members. Towards the approach of spring, 1838, an earnest missionary spirit pervaded the societies in general, and after much deliberation and prayer it was resolved to undertake a new mission, though the circuit was still embarassed through the expensive persecution before-named. Messrs. J. Ride and A. Bell were appointed to prosecute missionary labours in the county of Surrey, and in the northern extremity of

Berkshire. On the 17th of April they walked thirty miles to Guildford, the county town of Surrey. On their way they conversed occasionally with persons on religious subjects, and met with many instances of most deplorable and almost incredible ignorance. A brief dialogue between Mr. Ride and an aged female shall be given.

Mr. Ride.—"Do you know anything of the great God?"

Aged Woman.—"No, we know nothing about the great God here. I suppose you mean religion."

Mr. R.—"Do you know anything of Jesus Christ?"

Aged Woman.—"There is no man of that name living anywhere about here."

Mr. R.—"Do you know the way of salvation?"

Aged Woman.—"I have lived here many years, but I have never heard of such a way yet. But there are some men making a new road down yonder; you had better ask them if that is the way of salvation."

One would be ready to hope that the old lady did not distinctly hear the questions proposed; but habitual negligence of religion, and wilful absence from the house of God for many years, of which there were multitudes of instances in the county, would gradually envelope the mind in darkness which might be felt. Mr. Guy, who succeeded Mr. Ride in this mission in June, says, "the people were the darkest he had ever met with." To diffuse the light of Divine truth among people so fearfully sunk in ignorance and wickedness was no easy matter; and in prosecuting their benevolent enterprise the missionaries had to endure many hardships and privations. Having few homes during the spring and summer of 1838, they were obliged to spend many hours alone in the woods, or on wild heaths, and to suffer much hunger and thirst. But they persevered in their pious labours, and an encouraging measure of success crowned their efforts. Mr. Aaron Bell, however, soon finished his course. His end was affecting. On August 21st, 1838, passing through Eton, near Windsor, to one of his preaching appointments, he turned aside to bathe in a back stream of the

Thames, and was drowned. He had laboured with much zeal a little above two years, had faced formidable opposition with undaunted courage, and had been the means of bringing a goodly number of souls to Christ. He died at the early age of twenty-one years. Several societies were formed in this mission during the year, and the prospect of future good was encouraging. The mission was subsequently called the Windsor Mission.

In the home part of the circuit, too, the good work made some progress, notwithstanding some unreasonable restrictions laid by the landlord upon the services of the chapel in Reading, and the opposition of clergymen and others at several country places. An instance or two of the kind of opposition the missionaries met with shall here be recorded.

On Sunday, June 11th, 1838, Mr. G. Grigg visited the village of Bisham, near Great Marlow. A few friends accompanied him to assist in singing. They began an open-air service on the village green about four o'clock in the afternoon. When Mr. Grigg had done praying the clergyman of the place came and ordered him away. A long altercation ensued, in which the clergyman gave utterance to his favourite Puseyitical notions of apostolic succession, and charged Mr. Grigg with being the origin of the disturbance which a number of drunken men had caused. These drunken men, unwashed, unshaven, and clothed in rags, were a portion of the clergyman's acknowledged flock, who, he said, would do as he told them, and needed no other instructor than he! A number of persons, however, listened to Mr. Grigg's address after the clergyman left him, some of whom were deeply affected, and afterwards became members of society at a neighbouring village.

On the following Tuesday evening Mr. Grigg went to Cookham-Dean, a place then proverbial for wickedness, and began to sing on the village green. A large congregation assembled, among whom was a number of the baser sort, who sang lewd songs, cursed and swore awfully, and then laid violent hands on Mr. Grigg, threw him down twice, and were about to tear off his coat when

two humane men who were passing by prevented them. Notwithstanding this disturbance an ungodly young man and two young women were convinced of sin at this service. On the 17th of July Mr. Grigg visited the place again. A number of persecutors had assembled at a public-house to prepare for creating an uproar. One of the ring-leaders was sent to commence operations, but he became powerfully affected while Mr. Grigg was singing the first hymn, fell upon his knees, and wept profusely. As Mr. Grigg was beginning to sing the second hymn about twenty persecutors, accompanied by a publican's daughter, came along the street shouting, beating old kettles, throwing stones, and firing guns. On arriving at the place where the missionary was conducting the service they were surprised to find their companion on his knees weeping. He intreated them to give over opposing the preachers; but though they were astonished to find him so affected they would not follow his advice. During the preaching they sang obscene songs, and uttered awful oaths, and at times the missionary's voice could not be heard for the uproar they made. But he was supported by a gracious sense of the Divine presence, and was cheered with the evidence afforded that the Lord was working upon the minds of several of the people. At the close of the service he explained the nature of a Christian society, and offered to receive the names of those who were anxious to obtain salvation, and were wishful to unite in church fellowship. As no one came forward he bade the people good night, and took his departure. A young man, however, ran after him, and on coming up to him, with a faltering voice and streaming eyes, said, "Sir, will you take my name?" Mr. Grigg asked him a number of pointed questions respecting his views and feelings on religious subjects, and being satisfied with his answers he took his name. Several others who were following Mr. Grigg for the sake of religious conversation, having overtaken him, he went with them into an old quarry near the road, where he held a class meeting, giving religious advice to each according to his need, and there he formed a society of thirteen members; a novel place in



which to form a christian church, and under novel circumstances surely, there being as yet no place obtained in which the society could meet for instruction and prayer, and none where they could hear the gospel preached, except in the open-air. But the kingdom of Christ is spiritual in its nature, and may exist and flourish where there is neither gorgeous temple nor pompous rites to attract the wondering gaze of men. The simple missionary and his anxious inquirers in the old quarry were for the time too intent on spiritual matters to think even for a moment on the propriety of seeking for a house or room in which to hold their regular assemblies. It was not till after Mr. Grigg had arrived at Great Marlow, two miles distant, and had retired to his room for prayer and repose, that the need of a place to meet in rushed upon his mind. Then the necessity distressed him, and led him to cry earnestly to God in behalf of the newly-formed society, and that a suitable room for meetings might be obtained. Next day he went to the village again, visited many of the inhabitants, and obtained the loan of a house to preach in, and of another in which to meet the society. It is gratifying to add that the class formed in the old quarry became a very flourishing one, and five of its first members became acceptable local preachers. A new chapel was also in due time erected, and a prosperous Sabbath-school established.

The year's increase of members in the whole circuit was 100; the augmented expenses were all met; and through the energetic labours and perseverance of Mr. Ride in soliciting subscriptions towards the expenses of the cruel persecution before named, and the kind assistance furnished by christians of various denominations, the whole expenses were discharged, and the circuit freed from embarrassment.

The ensuing year was one of still greater prosperity. The restrictions under which the friends in Reading had been laid respecting the number and length of the services they were permitted to hold in the chapel in London-road had subjected them to great inconveniences, and had materially retarded the progress

of the cause. But Divine Providence opened the way for the purchase of a larger chapel near the centre of the town, which was happily secured at a moderate price, and liberal contributions were obtained towards the purchase. The late Thomas Baker, Esq. occupied the chair at the annual missionary meeting, on the 8th of April, 1839, and though a member of another denomination, he there publicly offered to give fifty pounds towards the cost of the chapel, which was a means of stimulating other persons to afford generous support. Mr. Baker also gave forty pounds additional to double the opening collections, and afterwards built at his own expense a large school-room, and a preacher's house underneath, on ground in connection with the chapel, rendering the premises of great value, and placing them in easy circumstances. After removing to the chapel in question the congregations and the society gradually increased, and the cause in Reading became strong and prosperous.

The missionary work was also extended, Mr. Baker having generously contributed the sum of £100 towards the employment of five missionaries in the neighbouring counties. We regret that we cannot give detailed information respecting the labours and successes of these additional missionaries. We find four more preachers employed in the circuit at the conference of 1840 than at that of 1839, but no account of their spheres of labour. We can only state that the increase of members for the year was 271, affording presumptive evidence of new societies having been formed through missionary labours. A notice or two of the opposition encountered by Mr. Grigg on the Windsor mission, and of the success he realised notwithstanding, must close our present account of the Reading circuit. Messrs. Guy, Hedges, and Grigg were appointed to this mission in 1839. Their labours were hard, their fare poor, their privations many, and their persecutions neither few nor small. On the 24th of September Mr. Grigg went to preach at Winkfield Row. He had previously heard of the moral degradation of many of the inhabitants, and they had been informed of his coming to preach to them. He selected the green



in the centre of the village for the purpose, but ere he began the service he sat down on some logs of wood to rest a little and to read a portion of the Bible. A woman of great physical strength and of a generous disposition, but not then renewed by Divine grace, came to ask him whether he were the gentleman that was going to preach. Being answered in the affirmative she gravely advised him not to make the attempt, assuring him that he would be "roughly handled." Mr. Grigg replied that he was often cruelly treated, and that he could not conscientiously leave the place without attempting to preach. "Then," said his generous adviser, "I will lend you a chair to stand upon, and you had better stand near my garden gate." Mr. Grigg did so, and began to sing a hymn. He had sung one verse in quietness, when a number of young men came out of a public-house opposite, and one of them overturned the chair upon which Mr. Grigg was standing, by which he was thrown upon the ground. His kind female friend, not having yet learned that the weapons of the christian warfare are not carnal but spiritual, struck the disturber on the back of his head, and knocked him down. Then seizing the chair with one hand, and Mr. Grigg with the other, she pulled him within her garden gate, and said, "Stand and preach there." Mr. Grigg proceeded with singing, and the persecutors began to pelt him with flint stones and other missiles, and to besmear him with the sediment of a horse pond close by. When he had finished singing he knelt down to pray; and while in this solemn act of devotion his godless persecutors rushed through the gate, seized him, tore his coat, and dragged him out of the garden, and along a flint road about fifty yards. Turning to the ring-leader the suffering missionary inquired what he had done to be served in that manner. The persecutor candidly replied that he could assign no reason for the ill-treatment,—and apparently conscious that he was liable to be prosecuted, and fearing the result, he expressed a hope that Mr. Grigg would not "do anything in the affair." The latter replied that if he and his companions would promise never to molest him or any other preacher any more he

would freely forgive them. They promised they would never interfere again, and he shook hands with them, and returned to his former standing-place, where, though his coat was torn to rags, his person besmeared with filth, and blood was flowing from his wounded face, he preached to those who were willing to hear. After the service his kind friend took him into her house, procured him water to wash himself, cleaned his clothes as well as she was able, whilst her husband prepared some tea for his refreshment. They expressed their deep sympathy with him in his sufferings, and regretted that they could not accommodate him with lodgings. He thanked them for their kindness, prayed with them, bade them good night, and then tried all the public-houses and several of the farmers and cottagers in vain to obtain a night's lodging. Being at length told that no one durst entertain him through fear of the most influential persons in the parish, he ceased to inquire further, and being too remote from the residence of any friend, he walked in the road till midnight, and then went into a field, where he lay till five o'clock in the morning. But his patient endurance of the inhuman treatment he received was not in vain. He shortly afterwards received a written invitation to visit the place again, informing him that a house would be provided for preaching, and all needful provision be made for his entertainment. He was happy to comply with the invitation, and was grateful to find a commodious preaching-house, properly fitted up with forms and candlesticks, ready for service. Several respectable families attended, a gracious influence accompanied his preaching, many of his hearers were deeply affected, and in due time a flourishing society was established.

About the time that Mr. Grigg preached at Winkfield Row he also visited Bracknell and Warfield. At the former he was pelted with raw potatoes and rotten eggs, and at the latter some godless persecutors attempted to fill his mouth with gravel and nut-shells: but at each place much good was effected, and many sinners turned to the Lord. Flourishing societies were established and suitable chapels erected.



We must now glance at the progress of the stations in Herefordshire. Pillawell circuit made considerable advancement during the period to which this chapter refers. In the city of Hereford the society and congregation greatly improved. The apprehension of Mr. J. Morton for preaching in the open-air was a means of making the society better known, and of awakening considerable interest in its welfare. Mr. Morton preached in the open-air at Friars', in the neighbourhood of Quaker's Lane in that city, one Sunday morning in June, 1833, when he was ordered to desist by a constable; but he nevertheless continued the service, and was allowed to conclude in peace. On Sunday morning, August 26th, 1833, he went to the same place again, it being proverbial for wickedness, and therefore greatly needing evangelistic efforts for its reformation. But while singing the first hymn Mr. Milton, a magistrate, made his appearance, and threatened to send him to prison, unless he would immediately conclude. Mr. Morton was not trespassing on private property, nor blocking up a thoroughfare, and as he knew that he was violating no law, he respectfully but firmly declined to relinquish the opportunity of doing good at the command and threatening of a person who was overstepping the bounds of his authority. The magistrate, therefore, ordered a policeman to take Mr. Morton into custody, and to conduct him to prison. The policeman immediately obeyed his orders, and Mr. Morton, not being permitted to finish singing the hymn at the Friars', continued to sing it as he was led by the officer through several streets to the city prison, being accompanied by his friends, who assisted in the exercise. On arriving at the prison Mr. Morton was led in, and the door closed. His friends then returned and went to their preaching-room, and united in prayer for their imprisoned minister and his erring opponents. The news of the occurrence spread rapidly through the city, and awakened considerable surprise, and called forth the disapprobation of many. Some influential parties visited Mr. Morton in his confinement, and showed him great kindness and respect; among others was Mr.

E. Pritchard, a respectable attorney, a member of an Independent congregation, who generously volunteered to plead his cause gratuitously. On the following morning Mr. Morton was brought before the Mayor and other magistrates, charged with having committed a nuisance by preaching on the King's highway. Mr. Pritchard appeared in his defence; and the magistrates would gladly have set Mr. Morton at liberty if he would have admitted that he had done wrong. But Mr. Morton knew that he had done no wrong, and he therefore respectfully objected to make any concession. His spirit, his bearing, and his address produced a deep impression in his favour in the crowded court; but the magistrates, unwilling to admit that Mr. Milton had committed an error by ordering Mr. Morton to be taken into custody, required him to be bound for his appearance at the next general sessions. Messrs. Pritchard and Yapp gave bail for him; but when he appeared at the sessions "no true bill" was found against him. He and others of his brethren afterwards preached in the open-air without molestation, and through the kind interference of several influential persons the persecution which the society had long endured from a multitude of godless men materially abated. The congregations greatly increased, and encouraging accessions were made to the church. In the circuit report for 1836 it is said, "Several of the most violent persecutors have gone the way of all flesh, others have been transported, and some have been converted to God." Several of the most respectable inhabitants continued to exercise their authority for the protection of the society; the preaching-room was generally crowded with attentive hearers, and the society numbered upwards of eighty members. In May, 1837, an eligible plot of land was purchased with a view to the erection of a chapel. The friends to the cause liberally contributed towards the object; the members of Parliament for the city and county sent handsome donations, and other respectable persons generously assisted. The chapel was in due time commenced, and in June, 1838, was opened for Divine worship under very auspicious circumstances.



ar 1840 Hereford became the head of a new circuit, with
lling preachers and 230 members.

ll circuit, from which Hereford circuit was separated,
making progress in other directions. At Pillawell a
el was opened for Divine service in July, 1835, and
ces had made encouraging advancement. About the
of this year an opening was effected in Monmouth,
y town of Monmouthshire. The late Mr. Ball, a super-
nerly a local preacher in Louth circuit, gave the prea-
earty reception, and laboured with great zeal and dili-
establish a society. Through the blessing of God on the
f his servants an attentive congregation was collected,
arch, 1836, the society numbered about forty members.

city of Gloucester the efforts of this circuit were less
. In June, 1837, an interesting camp-meeting was held
r, rendered famous as the birth-place of George Whitefield,
residence of Robert Raikes, generally regarded as the
f Sabbath-schools; but the mission here was afterwards
l, through inability, we judge, to meet the pecuniary
re. A subsequent effort to establish a mission in this
r more promising circumstances, will come under our
a later portion of this work.

Pillawell circuit was extending its borders in Hereford-
Monmouthshire, Cwm circuit was also laudably employed
ary efforts in the same counties. In the town of Brom-
the east of Herefordshire, and at many villages and
round, the missionaries belonging to this circuit laboured
and diligence, in the midst of much opposition, and
f many hardships and privations. They, however, met
asure of success. A room was taken on rent in Brom-
opened for worship on August 4th, 1833, and a new
s opened there about two years afterwards. But the
n this part of the county did not flourish like those in
part, several untoward circumstances having occurred
rded their progress.

In October, 1834, this circuit began missionary operations in the north-eastern portion of Monmouthshire, in a hilly and thinly-populated district, some miles eastward of Abergavenny. For some time the prospect was gloomy, but in the beginning of the year 1835 a pleasing change took place. Mr. Joseph Grieves and Mr. Thomas Lanwarne had the satisfaction of seeing many anxious inquirers after salvation made happy in the love of Christ, and evince the scriptural character of their religion by a consistent and devout life. The societies then raised were comprised in what was afterwards called Rose Cottage Branch, and are now incorporated in Abergavenny branch of Pontypool circuit.

Passing from Cwm circuit to the neighbouring one of Blaenavon, we find it employed in missionary labours at Swansea and the neighbourhood, in Glamorganshire, South Wales. Application having been made in this circuit in January, 1834, for a missionary to be sent to Swansea, Mr. Joseph Hibbs visited the town, in order to ascertain whether there was a good prospect of success: and on his delivering a favourable report—expressing the good that would be likely to result from open-air preaching—Mr. Henry Higginson was appointed a missionary to Swansea and the vicinity. He started from Blaenavon for this field of labour on Tuesday, March the 10th, 1834, and according to the custom of the connexion's missionaries at that period, went the journey on foot. He arrived at Swansea on the Friday following, and met with great kindness at the house of Captain Alder, Mrs. Alder having been a member of the Primitive Methodists at Shields, in the north of England. On Sunday, the 16th, he commenced his public labours by preaching at the Pier-head to an attentive and respectable assembly; and in the evening he preached in the streets. The congregation on the Quay, on Sunday afternoon, gradually increased, so that Mr. Higginson frequently preached to above a thousand persons, who listened with marked attention to his earnest and thrilling discourses. Several houses in the town were opened for him to preach in, many of the inhabitants showed him great kindness, other denomations of christians manifested much

fraternal feeling, and Mr. Higginson soon succeeded in forming a small society of those who had benefited by his ministry. He preached with effect at Mumbles, Merton, Llandon, Reynoldstone, Llanmaddock, Llangennith, and at Portegnon, some of which places are a dozen or fifteen miles from Swansea. At Reynoldstone a pious clergyman of the Established Church attended the service, and treated Mr. Higginson with much kindness and respect. The prospect of the mission was very cheering towards the end of May, when Mr. Higginson was succeeded by Mr. Joseph Hibbs. Though the former had laboured there but a little above two months his efforts had been rendered very successful, considerable spiritual good had been effected, and he left thirty members in society at Swansea, ten at Mumbles, and four at Merton—forty-four in all.

Mr. Hibbs entered into the labours of his predecessor with much zeal and energy, and prosecuted his enterprize with prudence and perseverance. Two thousand persons, it was computed sometimes listened to his preaching on the Quay at Swansea,—and large assemblies thronged to hear him at most of the country places before-named. A large preaching-room was taken on rent at Swansea, and opened on July 6th, 1834; the society then numbered above fifty members, some of whom had been amongst the most wicked persons in the town, but now gave evidence of being made new creatures in Christ Jesus, and had become champions in His cause. At Mumbles, about five miles from Swansea, the society soon rose to twenty members; and other places seemed full of promise. A powerful camp-meeting was held at Swansea on the 21st of September, 1834, which was a means of doing much good; many sinners were awakened to a sense of their danger, several penitents found peace at the love-feast in the evening, and considerable additions were soon afterwards made to the society. At the following March quarterly meeting of the circuit Swansea mas made the head of a new circuit, with two travelling preachers and 160 members. During the ensuing year several fresh places were successfully visited,

the congregations generally continued large, the societies acquired increasing stability, and an increase of eighty members was realized. In the succeeding year an additional preacher was employed, and an entrance apparently effected into Carmarthen, the county town of Carmarthenshire, as we find two local preachers residing there who preached at the opening of a chapel at Llanmaddock, in October, 1836. This appears to have been the first chapel opened in Swansea circuit. In December following a commodious one was opened in the town under favourable circumstances, which contributed greatly to the stability and increase of the society. In the report of the circuit for 1837, we find three travelling preachers, five chapels, and 281 members, being an increase of forty-one members for the year. A small increase was realized in the following year. In 1839 the members had become 300 in number. In 1840 we find 225 members for Swansea, and 128 for Carmarthen, which had become the head of a separate circuit with two travelling preachers.

Leaving the extension of the connexion in South Wales, we must briefly narrate some missionary operations in North Wales. Between the conference of 1835 and that of 1836 Shrewsbury and Bishop's Castle circuits jointly sent a missionary to Newtown, the chief town in Montgomeryshire. Mr. Ride, as we have seen in a former chapter, had visited this town many years before, and good appeared to be done under his zealous labours; but through some cause or other, it and other places in this part of Wales were soon relinquished. But an attempt was now made to establish a mission in the town and neighbourhood, which bade fair to prove very successful. Large congregations listened attentively to the preaching in the open-air, a favourable impression was made upon the inhabitants generally, and not a few were brought under religious convictions. A very commodious chapel, vacated by the Wesleyans for a new and larger one, was purchased on reasonable terms, and every thing seemed to promise, for a time, that a very flourishing cause would be established. But several unhappy circumstances occurred which blighted the fair



prospect, and inflicted an irreparable injury on the infant cause The most mischevious of these occurrences was the improper conduct of the most popular preacher who visited the town. Not having kept his expenditure within his income, he, in his embarrassment, made use of a portion of the society's money for his own purposes, and then ran away from his station, and emigrated to America, where it is reported, he died some years since in a state of most affecting destitution. The cause which he greatly injured by his unfaithfulness, survived the shock it had received, but did not recover its prosperity, or re-assume the promising aspect which it had previously presented, so that its maintenance became a burden to the two circuits by which it was supported.

Burland circuit next claims our attention. Having been favoured with great prosperity for several years, considerably enlarged its borders in Cheshire, and many of its societies having become strong and flourishing, it was prepared to enter upon missionary enterprises elsewhere. Northampton, and the neighbourhood were selected as the sphere of operations, and Mr. James Hurd was sent as a missionary, between the conference of 1834, and March 1835. He commenced his labours by preaching in the open-air in the town, and soon afterwards visited several villages around, where he also preached with a measure of success. He succeeded in forming a few societies, among whom he was esteemed for his zealous and laborious efforts. Mr. James Posser was also rendered useful in the conversion of sinners, and in strengthening and improving the mission. Respectful mention might likewise be made of several other brethren who laboured zealously to do good, with various degrees of success; but the mission was not so prosperous as most others of the connexion, and the circuit was at great expense in its maintenance. The extinction of the Revivalists in this district notwithstanding their previous prosperity, rendered many of the inhabitants cautious respecting uniting with another new community; whilst the majority confounded the two denominations; imagining that as the Primitive

Methodists sang many of the same hymns and tunes as the Revivalists had done, and resembled them in the open-air worship, and in some other respects, that they belonged to the same community, and were now making a second attempt to establish a cause, which, like the former, would prove ineffectual. These things greatly militated against the prosperity of the mission. The missionary efforts, however, were continued despite of all discouragements, and permanent societies were established, but not so vigorous and flourishing as those in most other parts of the kingdom.

We must now glance at the progress of Nottingham district. Some unpleasant occurrences which took place in Nottingham circuit first claim our notice. Some declension in the power of religion, and some relaxation in discipline, had occurred in the year 1830, if not before,—and when Messrs. Jersey, Worsnop, and W. Antliff were stationed to the circuit in 1834, the societies were in a very critical state. Mr. Jersey had been very useful in missionary labours, but was not well qualified to superintend a large circuit in difficult circumstances. His infirmities of temper unhappily irritated erring brethren, and provoked them to run into greater evils than they might otherwise have done. There were considerable faults both in him and his principal opponents. The latter, who formed the majority in some official meeting, proceeded so far as to suspend him from his ministerial duties, and forcibly prevented him from preaching in Canaan-street chapel, Nottingham. This severe measure only tended to widen the breach which had been made; it was disapproved by the General Committee of the community, and a serious rupture ensued in the circuit. A number of local preachers and about 300 members withdrew, and formed separate societies. The separatists seemed for a short time to flourish, but they soon disagreed among themselves, the leaders sank into obscurity, their preaching-rooms in the town were speedily given up, and some of the members returned to Canaan-street society, but many, unhappily, fell away. After the rupture the circuit began to revive, and



rapidly gathered strength; so much so that at the quarterly meeting of 1835 all the vacancies caused by the secession had been filled up, and even an increase for the year of 123 members was reported! This prosperity was attributed primarily to the rich out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, graciously vouchsafed in answer to the earnest and believing prayers of many of the members, and secondarily to the enforcement of the doctrine of a present salvation, the laborious efforts of the preachers, and a conscientious regard to the discipline of the connexion. But though the circuit *generally* prospered greatly, immediately after the disruption before-named, the congregation and society connected with Canaan-street chapel did not entirely recover the shock which that disruption occasioned; and Mr. Jersey's days of usefulness in the connexion were numbered. He subsequently became a Baptist minister, and emigrated to America.

Partly with a view to increase the congregation and invigorate the society of Canaan-street chapel, Mr. W. Antliff was appointed to commence a town mission in the spring of 1836. This enterprise he prosecuted with vigour and success. He frequently preached four times on the Lord's-day, commonly in the open-air, and thereby succeeded in attracting many to the regular services at the chapel, as well as in producing religious impressions on the minds of numbers who had not been in the habit of attending any place of worship. These missionary efforts gave promise of large results: but at the end of three months Mr. Antliff was removed to another circuit, and the town mission was then given up. Another town mission was, however, commenced in the summer of 1838, which was longer sustained, and conducted to a very successful issue. A circular, printed in the beginning of December following, states, "that impressed with a conviction that hundreds of the inhabitants of that part of the town, known by the name of 'Meadow Plats,' were living in total neglect of Divine worship, the Primitive Methodist society connected with Canaan-street chapel felt it a duty to use some special means to improve their moral and spiritual condition.

From the same circular and from communications from Mr. John Brownson, then superintendent of the circuit, we learn that a preaching-room in Robin Hood's Yard, capable of seating about a hundred persons, was taken on rent, and Mr. Edward Morton was engaged as a town missionary. There was preaching in this room twice on the Sabbath, and on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, and Mr. Morton also preached in the open-air whenever practicable, visited the people at their houses, distributed religious tracts, and read the Scriptures and prayed in those families where there was an opening. He entered upon these labours with becoming zeal, and prosecuted them with assiduity and success. The expense of this mission was partly supported by subscriptions. Friends, according to their ability, contributed a penny, sixpence, a shilling, or two shillings per week; and several benevolent gentlemen, not connected with the denomination, subscribed a pound a year or more, and a pious and liberal-minded clergyman of the Church of England, resident in the country, generously contributed three shillings per week! Such christian kindness and catholicity of sentiment merit a grateful mention in these pages, and are doubtless registered in the imperishable records of the skies.

Such was the prosperous state of this town mission that when the Wesleyans, in the autumn of 1839, vacated Hockley chapel, in the immediate neighbourhood, for a larger one, the Primitive Methodists were encouraged to purchase the noble edifice. A large chapel and a good society were secured by means of this mission, whilst Canaan-street congregation and society sustained no injury thereby. The members at Canaan-street had risen from 323 to 395 from the commencement of the mission to September, 1839, soon after which Hockley chapel was purchased. So successful an enterprise, so important in its results, surely affords ground for encouragement to engage in similar undertakings wherever practicable.

Bottesford Branch of Nottingham Circuit was favoured with large prosperity during the year of trial in the home part, to which



reference has been made. Mr. A. Worsnop was appointed to this branch at midsummer 1834, and his well-directed efforts were crowned with the Divine blessing. In April, 1835, he made another attempt to establish a cause at Grantham, and preached on the cross from which Mr. Wedgwood had been dragged to prison, as narrated in an early portion of this work. The prospect of success was not very cheering; for twenty-one weeks was preaching conducted in the open-air before a suitable place could be obtained in which to worship. But he and his brethren nobly persevered in their zealous and self-denying labours, and at length succeeded in obtaining a spacious room, capable of accommodating 300 hearers, in which their services were held, and in which many sinners were converted to God. A flourishing society was established, and in 1837 a suitable chapel was erected, which was opened for Divine worship on the 28th of May.

At some other places, unpromising at first, the brethren succeeded through the blessing of God on their persevering labours. We name only Knighton, near Belvoir Castle, where they preached three years in the open-air, whenever the weather would permit, before they could obtain a place to hold their services in. A courageous woman then ventured to open her dwelling for their accommodation, a large congregation was soon collected, and a society formed.

In September, 1835, Bottesford branch was made into a separate circuit, and reported 300 members to the next conference, being an increase of seventy-four.

We now turn to Loughborough circuit, and shall briefly record its mission to Melton Mowbray. Mr. Wedgwood visited this town and preached in the open-air about the time that other towns in the country were visited by missionaries of the denomination, but no permanent establishment was then effected. Being only fifteen miles from Loughborough, the June quarterly meeting of that circuit for 1834 resolved to make another effort. Three local preachers nobly volunteered to visit the town on the 6th of July, and on that day they held two preaching services in the open-air.

The congregations were large and attentive, and the prospect of gaining an establishment was cheering. In a short time a small society of five members was formed, which by the end of the year had increased to nearly thirty. In January, 1835, the preaching-room had become too small, and a plot of land had been purchased with a view to erecting a chapel upon it. Several of the neighbouring villages had also been visited successfully, and societies had been formed at Nether Broughton, Clawson, and Frisby. At Wymondham a room had been engaged for preaching, and a good congregation collected. The mission was then regarded as wearing a pleasing aspect, and with three villages which had been transferred from the home part of the circuit, afforded full employment for one travelling preacher. During the ensuing year it continued to progress, and at the district meeting of 1836, we find it represented as a separate circuit, containing 135 members. The official report says, "We cannot but adore the mercy of God shewn to us through another year. Our difficulties have not been few, but God has been with us; several new places have been opened, some excellent societies formed, eight class leaders and ten local preachers have been raised up, and we have built two chapels, one at Melton Mowbray, and the other at Selford, both of which are likely to do well. Many of the vilest sinners have been converted to God, and are now living witnesses of the power of Divine grace." Serious difficulties, however, arose in connection with Melton chapel, which tried the faith and patience of the trustees, and exercised a depressing influence upon the society. But the faithful friends struggled hard under their numerous difficulties, and by the district meeting of 1837 had obtained considerable relief for Melton chapel, and were able to report a small increase of members, notwithstanding the improper conduct of several local preachers, whom the authorities had been compelled to exclude from society. During the following year the circuit made greater advancement, realizing an increase of thirty-eight members, and in 1840 the members had risen to the number of 230. This success, though falling far short of that which attended many of the mis-



sions which have come under our notice, is not to be despised, but should rather be regarded with becoming gratitude to Almighty God by whom all spiritual good is effected.

The progress of Leicester circuit next merits a brief record. According to a statement made by the late Mr. Thomas Morgan, in an article on the "Rise and progress of Primitive Methodism in Leicester," some of the leading office-bearers in the society had disturbed its harmony and impeded its progress for some time, till, under the superintendency of Mr. George Herod, they withdrew from the connexion, "took all they could away with them, and set up for themselves." "This division," continues Mr. Morgan, "though troublesome at the time, proved a blessing afterwards, as peace was restored to the official meetings. The rules of the connexion became more respected, and a foundation was laid for future prosperity." By referring to the minutes of conference we learn that the number of members reported in the year 1833, was 727. The following year the number was reduced to 662, the secession just named having occurred during the year. The succeeding year 762 were reported, being an increase of 100. In 1836 the number reported was 800, being an increase of seventy-three members during the three years superintendency of Mr. Herod, notwithstanding the disruption before-mentioned. Mr. Herod was succeeded by Mr. Morgan, who says, "We found the circuit generally in peace, in the observance of rule, and perhaps the way was more open for usefulness than it had been for our predecessors." Mr. Morgan entered upon his work in the circuit with characteristic zeal and ardour, and was happy to secure the hearty co-operation of his colleagues, the office-bearers, and the societies generally. According to Mr. Morgan's statement in the article just named there was an increase of 100 members during his first year in the circuit. But in the minutes of conference for 1837 there appears a decrease of thirty-six. This discrepancy we cannot account for, unless Mr. Morgan reckoned from the number of members he found in July, 1836, and not from that contained in the March report for that year. The year

following was distinguished by a severe depression in trade, but the friends nevertheless succeeded in erecting a gallery in Friar Street chapel, and in purchasing and fitting up one at Deaf-nut. They also entered heartily into open-air services, and realised an increase of a hundred members. The third year was one of still greater operations; Thurmaston chapel was galleried, Belgrave chapel was erected, land was purchased for one at Ratby, an additional travelling preacher was taken out, a town missionary employed, a third society raised in the town, and an increase of a hundred members obtained in the circuit. Mr. Morgan's fourth year in the circuit was more prosperous than any of the preceding. A new chapel was erected at Ansty, and another at Rothley, and George Street chapel, Leicester, was somewhat enlarged, its walls were raised, and other improvements made, at the cost of £155, nearly the whole of which was contributed. Some new places were visited successfully, and societies formed thereat. A mission was commenced at Lutterworth, celebrated as the scene of the labours of the immortal Wickliff, the morning star of the Reformation. An unsuccessful attempt had been made to effect an entrance there some years before; but in July, 1839, a camp-meeting was held "near the spot on which Wickliff's bones were burned, and near the brook into which the ashes were cast." A large concourse attended the meeting, many sinners trembled under the discourses delivered, and much spiritual good was effected. An interest was soon afterwards established, which became the centre of a mission station, which, however, has since experienced some unhappy reverses. The increase of members in Leicester circuit during this year was 136, the number reported to the conference of 1840 being 1100. The circuit had made much progress during Mr. Morgan's superintendency, and was now in a very prosperous state.

In examining the progress of Hull district we find Hull circuit as heretofore engaged largely in missionary enterprises. In the latter part of the year 1833, Mr. W. Clowes paid a visit to Cornwall, and while from home on that occasion he felt an impression



on his mind that Hull circuit ought to open a mission on the south coast of England, and that it should be commenced at Portsmouth, or in the Isle of Wight. On returning to Hull he stated his impression to the quarterly meeting of the circuit, when the brethren, falling in with his views, appointed Messrs. Harland and Clemitson to the places in question. The missionaries arrived at Portsmouth on the 2nd of July, 1834, and after engaging lodgings at Southsea, they proceeded to Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, and thence to Newport. During the week they opened their commission in a marl-pit, near the top of the village of Carrisbrook, having previously gone round the neighbourhood to invite the people to attend the service. A large company assembled, and a gracious influence pervaded the congregation.

The openings in this beautiful island were very encouraging; the missionaries were generally welcomed as the servants of God, and most of the ministers of other communities and the members of their respective churches bade them good speed in the name of the Lord. A rumour was at one time circulated that some opposition had been offered to one or both of the missionaries at some of their open-air services, and two highly respectable gentlemen, one of them a solicitor, the other a county magistrate, assured Mr. Harland of their approval of his proceedings, and that they would use their influence to secure for him and his colleague the right of prosecuting their work in peace.

Although an unsuccesful effort had been previously made to establish a mission in the island, by a southern circuit, yet many places were now visited successfully, several societies were formed, and an amount of good was effected which, though not extensive, gladdened the hearts of the missionaries, and stimulated them to perseverance in their laborious efforts. At the end of about eleven months the number of members in society on the entire station was fifty. The progress of the cause was, however, afterwards impeded by several painful occurrences, and the Isle of Wight mission can hardly be regarded as a prosperous one.

The opening at Portsmouth was less favourable than that in the

island. The character of a large portion of the resident population, the migratory habits of its naval and military inhabitants, and the awful desecration of the Lord's day, caused the missionaries deep sorrow of heart, and their spirits were not a little depressed. The first effort was not very promising. Mr. Harland says, "On commencing our mission at Southsea, Portsmouth, I went into the streets, and after I had been singing a considerable time, I gathered around me six or eight children; subsequently, two or three women drew near, and to this very limited congregation I preached the glorious Gospel of the blessed God."

The missionaries then determined that if civilians would not hear them, they would preach to the soldiers and others on Southsea Common, and among those they met with a much more favourable opening. A chapel was soon after taken in Dock Row, Landport, and open-air preaching was begun in the neighbourhood. After having established regular services both in the chapel and in the open-air, many people were induced to hear the missionaries, especially out of doors; but the work of soul-saving did not progress as was desired, nor has Portsmouth mission ever yielded fruit commensurate with the labour bestowed upon it.

After having established societies on each side of the Solent, an invitation was sent for one of the missionaries to visit Southampton; and Mr. Harland opened his commission in that beautiful town at the end of a new street by the side of "the ditches." The singing soon attracted a large congregation, not the most respectable in appearance, whose behaviour generally evidenced very little reverence for the worship of God; but the influence of the Holy Spirit moved on the motley crowd during the preaching of the word, and order and decorum prevailed. Yet when Mr. Harland was about to announce when the next service would be held, a constable came up to him, and asked, "Are you the man who has been preaching?" Mr. H. answered in the affirmative. "Then," said the magisterial official, "You'll be off about your business, or I'll have you in the black hole in five minutes!" The people, however, interfered, and might have treated the constable roughly,



had not the missionary remonstrated with them in order to prevent it.

The missionaries found a warm friend in the Rev. James Crabb, who allowed them to preach in the Bethel, a seamen's chapel, until a large room was taken on rent and fitted up for their use, in which many sinners were brought to the knowledge of the truth. Subsequently the chapel in St. Mary's Street was purchased, and became the regular place of worship for the increasing society. The first camp-meeting held at Southampton was convened on the race-ground, on Sunday, the 28th of May, 1837, when persecution raged furiously. While the friends were singing through the streets they were repeatedly interrupted by an officious policeman; and when they had got through the town a number of godless men collected dung out of the adjoining fields and threw it upon them, besmearing the attire of the females in a shameful manner. On the race-ground the persecutors seemed maddened with rage, and did all in their power to break up the meeting. But the preachers and their zealous friends nobly maintained their ground, and manfully encountered the opposition of their wicked assailants; and their Divine Master was with them in an uncommon manner, and gave efficacy to the word of His grace. Even some of the persecutors were awe-struck, and were apparently brought to serious reflection. One of them was so alarmed at a review of his conduct that he could not sleep upon his bed, and cried out in agony, "Do you not hear those people preaching and praying?" One of the worst of them, a young man, was suddenly cut off. He had engaged to play at cricket on the same ground on the following Sabbath, but ere the arrival of the blessed day which he had intended thus to desecrate, he was a corpse, and his spirit was ushered into the presence of his Maker! A good lovefeast was held in the evening, after the camp-meeting, at which many penitents were found seeking the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Southampton, as well as the Isle of Wight, had been visited by one or more preachers of the connexion before Mr. Harland preached

there; but it had been abandoned, probably through inability of the circuit which sent them to meet the expense attendant on the maintenance of a mission there. This second attempt, however, proved successful, and Southampton has now for some years been the head of the circuit.

While Mr. Harland was labouring on the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth mission he received an invitation to visit Brighton, in the neighbouring county of Sussex. On arriving at that large and fashionable town, and making a few necessary inquiries, he found that the establishment of a mission there would be likely to prove a very expensive affair. But the hope of doing good and the laudable desire of embracing every opportunity of extending the kingdom of Christ, in which Hull circuit, as well as himself, participated, counterbalanced the dread of pecuniary difficulties. With a view to save expense to the mission funds he had walked between forty and fifty miles on the previous day; and he resolved to exercise the most rigid economy in that splendid town, that the expenses of establishing a mission there might be met by his circuit. He then visited certain persons known to be favourable to the enterprise, and held a religious service. Regular preaching was forthwith established, and a society formed. But though considerable good has been effected on Brighton mission it has never been very prosperous, and has proved, what Mr. Harland at first apprehended, "a very expensive affair." It is hoped, however, that a foundation has been laid for ultimate success, and that perseverance in active and self-denying labours will in time render this mission a self-sustaining station.

In examining the progress of Sunderland district during the seven years to which this chapter refers we find two or three of the circuits engaged in missionary labours, which we must briefly record. Ripon circuit reported only 331 members for the year 1833. The following year it reported only five more. Mr. W. Dent and his colleagues were then appointed to the circuit, and under the two years of his efficient superintendency the circuit improved considerably, the number of members increasing to that

of 450. He was succeeded in 1836 by Mr. W. Lister, and during the three years of his superintendency the circuit entered on a course of missionary labours, which proved eminently successful. They were, however, confined to the limits of the circuit, and the adjoining districts. At the September quarterly meeting of 1836, Thirsk, with twenty-seven members, was detached from the home part of the circuit, and made the centre of missionary efforts. Mr. Joseph Spoor was appointed to this scene of labour, and entered upon it with energy and zeal. Open-air services attracted persons in the town to the regular worship in the chapel, and an improvement in the congregation and society was the happy result. In the spring of 1837 a number of conversions took place, and the chapel became crowded to excess. Mr. Spoor then preached regularly at seven other places, and his little mission more than supported him and all other expenses. It was soon afterwards extended, which was followed by happy effects. In the circuit report for 1838 it is said, "In our Thirsk and Bedale mission we have a great work in many places, and an ingathering of precious souls."

Encouraged by the success of Thirsk mission, and the prosperity of the home part, the circuit's September quarterly meeting of 1837, decided to commence another mission at Borough Bridge, which in the report for 1838 was said to be advancing encouragingly. The old places in the circuit also prospered greatly. The report says, "In the home part we have a general revival going on; the congregations at most of the places are overflowing, sinners are being converted, and practical and experimental religion is more evident in the societies." The increase of members for the whole circuit was 250; a large one for a thinly populated agricultural district. The following year was also one of prosperity, the increase of members being 130. During the three years of Mr. Lister's superintendency of this circuit the travelling preachers were doubled in number, having arisen from four to eight, twenty-eight new societies were formed, and the members were nearly doubled, having increased from 450 to 860. So

greatly had the Lord crowned his labours and those of his worthy colleagues, and of the local preachers and other friends. Mr. John Day succeeded Mr. Lister, and at the conference of 1840 the circuit reported 879 members, being an increase for the year of nineteen; Middleham mission having been annexed to the circuit, and Pateley Bridge branch made into an independent station.

We find Newcastle-upon-Tyne circuit employed in missionary efforts during the period under consideration. In the autumn of the same year it sent Mr. James Johnson as a missionary to Dundee, where a promising commencement was made. In the report for 1836 it is said, "We have opened a mission at Dundee, in Scotland, which is in a prosperous state." This prosperity was, unhappily, but of short continuance. In the spring of the following year Mr. J. Johnson seceded from the connexion, and drew along with him about sixty members. We enter not into the details of this painful case. We simply add that the mission never recovered the shock; and that though the circuit struggled nobly with it for two years longer, the misssionary there getting disheartened, the mission was abandoned, much to the grief of its friends and supporters.

But some little advancement was made in other parts of Scotland. Glasgow made Paisley into a separate circuit, and Edinburgh circuit extended its labours to Dumfermline and Alloa. In the report for 1838 it is said, "We have opened a mission in Alloa, a seaport town, on the north side of the Frith of Forth, about thirty miles from Edinburgh, and have twenty-two members there. We have also missioned Dumfermline, a town midway between Edinburgh and Alloa, and have there a society of fourteen members." About two years afterwards Alloa was taken under the care of Sunderland circuit as a separate mission station, but did not become very prosperous.

Darlington circuit also engaged to some extent in missionary efforts, and made considerable progress during the period under consideration. At the conference of 1833 it contained only 280



members, but was considered to be in a more prosperous state than at any former period. Next year there was an increase of twenty members, and in the following of thirty-five. The circuit report for 1835 says, "Our circuit is more prosperous than it ever was; almost every society is improving. We have called out a third preacher, and have sent brother Towler as a missionary on entire new ground." The scene of his missionary labours was contiguous to the circuit, if not within its borders. They were not long continued by Mr. Towler, as he removed from the circuit in July following. But in the ensuing year new societies were formed at several places, and most of the old societies so improved that the increase for the year was 165. At the conference of 1837 an increase of sixty-two was reported; at the conference of 1838 an increase of 100; and at the conference of 1839 an increase of ten. Next year there was a small decrease, but the number reported was 633, being above double the number of members seven years before, an amount of progress highly gratifying, and demanding fervent gratitude to Almighty God.

We now direct our attention to Norwich district, and shall record its advancement from the conference of 1833 to that of 1840. Norwich circuit succeeded in erecting several chapels during this period, and made some addition to the number of its members, though not a large one. Fakenham circuit was more successful in this respect. Lynn circuit made Swaffham branch into an independent circuit, and commenced a mission at Peterborough, which was made into a separate circuit in 1839. Yarmouth circuit prospered abundantly. At the conference of 1833 it contained only 300 members, and employed but two travelling preachers, Messrs. Tetley and Bowthrop; but during the year a gracious revival of religion took place, and many sinners were converted to God. Many new places were opened by preaching in the open-air. Many of the local preachers being zealous for the Lord of hosts laboured abundantly, frequently walking twenty or thirty miles on the Lord's day and preaching twice; and their efforts were successful to an encouraging extent.

An opening was also effected at the large town of Ipswich, the county town of Suffolk. Under date of February 14th, 1834, Mr. Tetley, writing thence to Mr. Bourne, says, "It had for some time been impressed upon our minds that we should establish a mission at Ipswich. We began our operations by preaching in the open-air, and God blessed our exertions. Numbers are rejoicing that ever a Primitive Methodist preacher visited the place. I had a glorious time last evening while preaching in a school-room. We have now a society of about fifty members."

The total increase of members for the year, including both circuit and mission, was 120. At the conference of 1834 no fewer than five preachers were stationed to the circuit, more than double the number appointed to it at the preceding conference. The superintendent was the late zealous and devoted John Smith, a host in himself, then in the vigour of his days, and his ministry full of life and power. A glorious work progressed in the circuit. Ipswich mission also made some advancement. The increase of members during the first year of Mr. Smith's superintendency was 130, including those on the mission; but the second year was far more prosperous. From the circuit report we learn that numerous conversions took place, and among persons of all ages, from children of tender years to hoary headed sires of more than fourscore. Some of the old societies were doubled, and several new ones formed. Ipswich mission had extended into Essex, in which county several societies had been formed, including in all nearly 100 members. In the neighbourhood of Lowestoft much good was effected, and a missionary was appointed to Bungay and the vicinity. The increase of members for the year was 350.

The third year of Mr. Smith's superintendency was also a prosperous one. The Bungay mission does not appear to have succeeded; but we find a new mission established at Braintree, in Essex, which, however, was not of a promising character; and in March, 1837, included only twelve members. Several new places were visited successfully in the home part of the circuit, and flourishing societies established thereat.



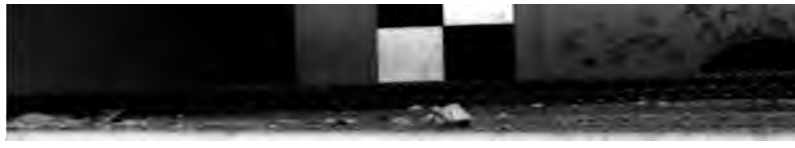
Ipswich branch had also made such progress, and had attained to such stability at the September quarterly meeting that it was made into a separate circuit containing 320 members, raised in the course of about three years. So graciously had the Lord owned the labours of His servants. The increase of members in the other parts of the circuit amounted to 200; making an increase of 680 members during the three years superintendency of Mr. Smith, reckoning from the March reports of each year. Many interesting details might be recorded of the work of God at different places during this period, did not our regard to brevity render it impracticable.

Mr. R. Howchin succeeded Mr. Smith in the superintendency of the circuit, and it is gratifying to record that it continued to advance. The increase for the next year was forty, and the year following fifteen. The number of members reported to the conference of 1840 was 860, nearly three times the amount reported seven years before, and Ipswich circuit, in Suffolk, and Colchester mission, in Essex, had been separated from it, containing 405 members at the conference of 1840.

Wangford circuit, in Suffolk, made from Yarmouth circuit in 1833, was also favoured with considerable prosperity. Wangford branch of Yarmouth circuit contained only about seventy members in July, 1832, when Mr. R. Howchin entered upon it. But the Lord so blessed his zealous efforts that at March following it was made into a separate circuit with two preachers and 233 members. The ensuing summer the brethren engaged largely in missionary efforts, visiting above twenty places contiguous to the circuit, and meeting with a considerable amount of success. The number of members reported to the next conference was 272, and to the following one 540. Among the new converts were many who had been addicted to almost every species of vice; their reformation was striking, and they became zealous in the service of Christ. The alteration in the morals of multitudes excited the wonder of beholders. In one village, where the inhabitants had been so immoral and so rude in their behaviour that no

stranger could pass through the streets without being insulted, the conversions were so numerous as to entirely change the moral aspect of society. Some who had been the most profligate became consistent christians; and some who had persecuted others became zealous for the faith which they had sought to destroy. In some parts of the circuit "whole families, and almost whole villages, were brought under religious impressions; and many who had been depraved to a proverb, became changed in life and heart." When Mr. Howchin left the circuit in 1835 it was in a very prosperous state, and able to support four travelling preachers. The number of members had increased more than seven-fold during the three years of his superintendency! His brethren in the ministry, most of the local preachers, and many of the praying people had nobly co-operated with him in the work of the Lord, who graciously vouchsafed His blessing in connection with their labours. The following year was also one of considerable success; but the next few years there appears to have been some declension, for at the conference of 1840 the number of members was only 528. Several new chapels, however, were built, and the societies became more established.

Brandon circuit experienced rich effusions of the Holy Spirit, and witnessed the conversion of multitudes of sinners. At the conference of 1833 the number of members was 660; but during the year Rockland, near Attleborough, Norfolk, was made into a separate circuit with 472 members, and there yet remained in the parent circuit 400 members, making an increase of above 200 members for the year. The next succeeding year was also a prosperous one, the increase of members being ninety-two. During the year following deep poverty and much suffering prevailed greatly among the people, and certain men of influence raised severe opposition against the cause; but despite of all the good work prospered, and the increase of members for the year was 106. The succeeding year the poverty and oppression under which the people laboured appear to have increased in severity. At Thelneham, Rushford, and Bridgham, the friends were deprived



of places to preach in, through the opposition of certain parties; and at Tottenham a land-owner threatened to turn all the members out of their houses and employment, and said that, "sooner than the ——— should preach in any of his cottages, he would raze them to the ground." The poor people had, therefore, no place in which to meet for religious worship but the open-air. But they remained firm to the cause which they had espoused, and whenever the weather would permit they assembled for worship in the lanes, and sought for shelter under hedge-rows; and notwithstanding the poverty and persecution which many of the societies had to endure, the work of God continued to progress, and the increase of members for the year was 112. The year following was not exempt from trials, but it also was a prosperous one, the increase of members being 120. "Grievous opposition" befel the friends in the next year; but they were favoured with a small increase of members, and succeeded in erecting a chapel at Brandon, and another at Thetford, two market towns. The year succeeding the increase of members was 138. The number of members reported to the conference of 1840 was 954—being 297 more than at the conference of 1833, though Rockland circuit, with 472 members, had been separated from it. The increase of 766 in an agricultural circuit during seven years, in spite of deep poverty and severe opposition, was abundant cause for gratitude to the Giver of all good.

Rockland circuit, as soon as it was formed, entered upon a course of great prosperity. At the district meeting of 1834 it reported 487 members, and under the superintendency of Mr. Robert Key it rapidly arose to great strength, and vastly enlarged its borders. In the report for 1835 it is said, "We have had some glorious outpourings of the Holy Spirit, and a great number of sinners have been converted to God. Our congregations are large, and many of our preaching-places are far too small to contain them." The number of members reported was 710. During the ensuing year sorrows and trials befel the circuit; but a mission appears to have been begun at Stowmarket, in Suffolk, and the

missionary and his flock as they went through the streets. At length Mr. Bunn was arraigned before a bench of magistrates, under the unfounded charge of obstructing the highway; and these worthies committed him to Bury jail for ten days, for an offence of which he had not been guilty! This shameful defiance of law and justice on the part of those who were solemnly pledged to maintain them excited no little surprise and indignation among the better sort of the inhabitants, and astonished even the prisoners at the jail. One of them said to Mr. Bunn, "Sir, they sent you here for trying to do good, and me for doing harm." Mr. Bunn endured his incarceration and its attendant privations and sufferings with christian fortitude; but was happy to obtain his release at the appointed time, and in the evening of the same day arrived at Mildenhall. Soon afterwards he stood up in the market-place again, and preached to several hundred attentive hearers. "Our enemies blushed," he says, "while they heard me tell all about the jail, and what it cost to get me there, and that I was resolved to go forward in the work of seeking to save souls; and from that time the opposition began gradually to abate." When he had spent a year on this mission he says, "I have laboured often in much sorrow, frequently amidst showers of stones and rotten eggs, and been sometimes without food, and without a bed to lie upon. I have endured bonds and imprisonment for Christ's sake, and on one occasion I received a blow on my head which caused me to bleed profusely. And though we have lost some members through threats or persecution, we have now fifty-five on the mission, and four local preachers, and are contemplating the erection of a new chapel. Also three of our number have died and gone to heaven. One of them was once a leading persecutor, but the Lord made us the instruments of his salvation."

The hope of erecting a chapel, as intimated in the preceding extract, was happily realized. Ground was obtained for the purpose at Beek Row, in the parish of Mildenhall, and within a mile and a half of the residence of the magistrate who was the chief actor in sending Mr. Bunn to prison. The foundation-stone was



laid on Good Friday, 1839, and the chapel was opened for Divine worship on the 7th of July following. Mr. Bunn preached his farewell sermon at the opening, and then removed to another station; and we find no records of the mission for the ensuing year.

Wisbeech circuit, in Cambridgeshire, made some progress during the period under review. It commenced a mission in Huntingdonshire, probably in Ramsey and the neighbourhood. In the circuit report for 1839 it is said, "We have opened a mission in Huntingdonshire." From this we infer that it was during the year that this mission had been commenced; and as the circuit reported an increase of 106 members, we conclude that the mission, though not very prosperous, had not been altogether unsuccessful. The following year was also one of progress in the circuit, the increase of members being above a hundred; but how great a portion of this increase was obtained on the mission we have no means of determining. We shall not enter into details respecting the progress of this circuit, but simply record that the number of members was nearly doubled from the conference of 1833 to that of 1840.

Ere we leave Norwich district we must briefly notice the progress of Hounslow circuit, then belonging to that district. Hounslow circuit was made from London circuit in the year 1832, with only seventy members, and it struggled hard for existence for a few years. In 1834 it reported seventy-six members, and in 1835 one hundred. The late Mr. James Pole was stationed to this circuit in 1834, he and a single preacher having both to depend upon fewer than eighty members for support. Their limited salaries could not be raised, and they had to endure many hardships and privations. They, however, persevered in their work, and met with a measure of success; and in the spring of 1835 it was resolved to commence missionary operations in Buckinghamshire. On Wednesday, the 8th of April, Mr. Pole walked twenty miles to High Wycombe, where he began his missionary labours in the evening, by preaching in the open-air in Queen's Square,

to hundreds of attentive hearers, some of whom treated him with kindness and respect. On the following Wednesday evening he preached in the market-house to a large assembly. On the next Wednesday evening, April 22, he preached again in the open-air to a numerous audience, and held a prayer-meeting afterwards, and then formed a society of six members. Mr. Pole also preached at the village of Dounley on the 10th of April, two days after he first preached at High Wycombe, and deep religious impressions were soon made on the minds of many of the inhabitants. He succeeded in forming a society there on the 19th, three days before that formed at High Wycombe. On Easter Monday, the 20th of April, an open-air meeting was held on Dounley Common, when some of the new converts publicly engaged in prayer, and other persons cried to the Lord for mercy. On the following day Mr. Pole dined with the constable, who informed him that he "had not before witnessed such an Easter; for every Easter since he had been constable he had been called out to keep the peace, but this time there was no need of it, as most of the people were engaged in the religious service held on the common." Mr. Pole also visited Lacey Green, in the same neighbourhood, and had the satisfaction of seeing many sinners converted. He likewise visited Penn, Littleworth, Hatton, and other places successfully; but Bladlon, Longwick, and Risborough gave no promise of success. The mission on the whole was prosperous, and the money raised thereon during the first quarter enabled the circuit to meet its demands. At the following quarterly meeting the income of the circuit more than met the demands, and the prospect of success encouraged the friends to employ an additional preacher. Mr. Pole's illness somewhat retarded the progress of the circuit, but the number of members had risen to 160 at the March quarterly meeting of 1836. At the June quarterly meeting, further progress was reported, and High Wycombe was made the circuit town. During the ensuing year the friends employed a fourth preacher, in order to sustain and extend their missionary operations; but some of the places visited not proving so successful as they had



hoped, some financial embarrassment was the result. The increase of members for the year, however, was forty, making the whole number 200. During the next year "much persecution was endured at some places," but the number of members reported was 260. During the two succeeding years there was some declension, the number of members being reported at 204. Here we close for the present our notice of Norwich district.

In glancing at Manchester district we meet with nothing in the period under consideration that requires a lengthened account. Manchester circuit's missionary operations merit a brief record. From an article in the connexional magazine for 1834, evidently written by Mr. Hugh Bourne, we learn that more active and vigorous open-air services began to be held in that large town during the prevalence of the cholera. A pious and zealous person being moved with compassion for the multitudes who had but little spiritual help in that period of peril and distress, held an open-air meeting at his own door for the benefit of those in the neighbourhood of his residence. He was quickly joined by a few persons like-minded with himself in holding similar meetings in different localities. Nine o'clock on Sabbath mornings was the period which they first selected for the holding of these zealous and useful services. They met by agreement in some public place, and there began to sing along the adjoining streets, stopping where convenient to engage in prayer and to deliver an earnest address of about ten minutes length. Proceeding rapidly from one place to another, they usually held four or five services of this character on a Sunday morning, some in large streets and others in the courts and alleys among the most destitute and needy. Their addresses were distinguished by simplicity and fervour; avoiding all controverted subjects, they preached the plain gospel, declaiming earnestly against drunkenness and its kindred vices, and strongly enforcing "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." And their well-meant efforts were not without an encouraging measure of success. Many persons were evidently affected by their earnest prayers and exhortations, and

frequently followed them to Jersey-street chapel, where they arrived in time for the regular service.

These zealous efforts, which the conductors called "re-missioning," were commenced a little after midsummer, 1832, and having proved highly beneficial in the localities contiguous to Jersey-street chapel, were soon extended to other parts of Manchester, and proved a means of establishing a cause in Salford. In this populous borough the brethren usually held open-air services on the Sabbath evenings, and made the children who surrounded them objects of special attention. A Sabbath-school was in due time instituted, regular preaching services were appointed, and a society was formed. In May, 1834, the school contained between two and three hundred children, and the society about seventy members.

The succeeding year was one of great prosperity in Manchester circuit, the increase of members amounting to 200; and two additional preachers were then obtained with a view to further enlargement and progress, which, happily, was realized to a considerable extent. In the report for 1836 it is said, "Our circuit is still favoured with a considerable share of prosperity. Although two extra preachers were called out about the time of last conference, one of whom is regularly employed as a missionary, we are out of debt; our increase of members is 120, and our various institutions are mostly doing well." Soon after the conference of 1836 Weymouth mission was placed under the care of this circuit, which proved an occasion of trial and considerable expense, but we need not particularize, having previously adverted to the painful circumstances which injured the mission. At the September quarterly meeting of this year Rochdale circuit was made from Manchester with 450 members and two travelling preachers.

Preston Brook circuit commenced missionary operations at Runcorn in the spring of 1834. Runcorn is a town in Cheshire, about fifteen miles south of Liverpool, containing a considerable population. In the year 1819 it was regularly visited by the preachers of Tunstall circuit; but not being so promising as other places to which they were invited it was soon relinquished. A second effort



to establish a cause was made in 1823 by Preston Brook preachers; but through the troublesome conduct of some persons who had come from another community the society was so much injured that the place was again abandoned in 1828. In 1834 the wickedness of the place moved the compassion of some of the leading men of Preston Brook circuit, who felt wishful to select it as a mission station; but the Irish mission requiring considerable assistance, they hesitated to incur additional pecuniary responsibilities, till Mr. R. Turner nobly offered to undertake a mission at Runcorn, without drawing upon the circuit's funds for the first quarter. His generous offer was accepted, and he commenced his missionary labours on Sunday, May 11th, 1834. His preaching in the open-air was rendered effectual in the enlightenment and conversion of an encouraging number of persons, who at once began to contribute towards his support, and to assist him in his zealous operations. At the expiration of the quarter it was found that Mr. Turner's salary and all other expenses had been met, and a small surplus was sent to aid the funds of the circuit. The open-air services were continued till the cold blasts of winter rendered it necessary to repair to some building for worship. A school-room was then secured for the services of the society, which was occupied till 1838, when a chapel was erected, and the cause acquired additional strength and stability. The chapel has since been enlarged to meet the wants of the growing society and congregation; and Runcorn has for some years been the residence of the superintendent preacher of Preston Brook circuit.

We close for the present our notice of Manchester district by stating that Bury circuit was made from Bolton in 1836, Wrexham from Chester in 1837, and Warrington from Preston Brook, and Haslingden from Blackburn in the same year, and Staley Bridge from Oldham in the year 1838. The increase of members in the whole district for the seven years was 2751, there being 6984 members in 1833, and 9635 in 1840.

Before we close this chapter we must briefly notice the Irish and American missions. Several excellent brethren, Messrs.

Bickerdike, Pugh, Pritchard, Jobling, McPherson, and others, laboured hard on the respective Irish missions, endured almost incredible hardships and privations through the poverty of the people, and the inability of the circuits under which they were placed to raise them adequate support. The day of eternity only will reveal what several of these worthy missionaries underwent in order to relieve the funds of their respective circuits, and to promote the benefit of Ireland; but though great good was effected by the Divine blessing on their zealous labours other communities largely shared the fruit, and the Primitive Methodist societies continued mostly small and feeble. In 1839 there were four stations, namely—Belfast, then just transferred from Shrewsbury to Dudley circuit's care and management, Lisburn, under the care of the Oswestry circuit, Lurgan, belonging to Preston Brook circuit, and Richhill, supported by Tunstall circuit.

Belfast mission embraced the town of Belfast, the ancient one of Carrickfergus, and Newtonards, besides several villages, and contained about 150 members. It had suffered for lack of a second preacher, and one was soon after sent by Dudley circuit.

Lisburn mission embraced two market towns, Lisburn and Dromore, and nearly twenty country places, extending about seventeen Irish miles in length and ten in breadth. It employed two missionaries, and contained about 170 members. The interest in the towns was feeble, partly owing to the want of more suitable places of worship; but many of the country places were flourishing.

Lurgan mission was of greater extent than Lisburn mission. It occupied a considerable district in the counties of Down and Armagh, being about twenty-six Irish miles in length and fourteen in breadth. It included three or four towns, and about twenty country places, and numbered 300 members.

Richhill mission was of less extent, and less prosperous than the two last-named. Taken altogether the Irish missions had proved more expensive and less successful than their sanguine



advocates had anticipated,—not sufficient allowance having been made for the peculiar circumstances of the country.

The progress of the American missions next claims a brief record. The number of missionaries in Canada was increased by the arrival of Mr. W. Lyle, in July, 1833, and of Mr. J. Partington towards the end of the following month. There were now six missionaries in this province, namely, Messrs. Summersides, Lyle, Partington, Berry, Lowdon, and Arthur. In the month of September in this year Messrs. Summersides and Berry commenced missionary operations at Niagara, and met with a measure of success; but we are unable to record the increase of members for the year. From the report of Hull circuit for 1835 we learn there was an increase for the past year of 100 members in the Canadian missions. In the minutes of conference for 1838 we find three stations in Canada, namely, Toronto, Brampton, and Niagara. Messrs. Summersides and Jolley were appointed to Toronto, Mr. Lyle to Brampton, and a missionary was wanted for Niagara. The number of members reported was 192 for Toronto, 163 for Brampton, and twenty for Niagara,—only 375 in all. The absence of several names from the stations and the small number of members indicate the difficulties and discouragements with which the mission had to contend, and its feebleness at that period. For the next two years we find no record of its progress, and must therefore here close for the present our notice of the Canadian mission.

The mission in the United States of America, which early became independent of the British Conference, or nearly so, was soon afterwards taken under the care of Hull circuit. In that circuit's report for 1836 it is said respecting the American mission, "From official reports New York and Philadelphia appear to be considerably improved." No mention is made of the mission in the following year; but in the minutes of conference for 1838 we find four stations, New York, Pottsville, Beech Woods, and Newark. Messrs. Raine and Brook were appointed to New York, Mr. W. Sanders to Pottsville, Mr. Berry to Newark, and one was

wanted for Beech Woods; New York reported 162 members, Pottsville 62, Beech Woods 40, Newark 12; only 276 in all. For the two following years we meet with no record of the state of this mission, which was probably struggling for existence, and not very successfully contending against numerous difficulties and discouragements.

But although neither the Irish nor the American missions made much progress during the seven years under review in this chapter, the connexion generally made very considerable advancement, as will be seen from the following statistics:—

1833.—Members 48,421, travelling preachers 290, local preachers 3,514, chapels 552.

1834.—Members 51,837, increase 3,597; travelling preachers 339, increase 49; local preachers 3,758, increase 244; chapels 601, increase 49.

1835.—Members 56,649, increase 4,772; of travelling and local preachers and chapels we have no returns.

1836.—Members 62,306, increase 5,657; travelling preachers 413, increase for two years 74; local preachers 4,890, increase 1,132; chapels 802, increase 201.

1837.—Members 65,277, increase 2,971; travelling preachers 460, increase 47; local preachers 5,343, increase 453; chapels 923, increase 121.

1838.—Members 67,666, increase 2,389; travelling preachers 470, increase 10; local preachers 6,892, increase 1,599; chapels 939, increase 16.

1839.—Members 70,396, increase 2,730; travelling preachers 467, decrease 3; local preachers 6,762, decrease 130; chapels 1,025, increase 86.

1840.—Members 73,990, increase 3,594; travelling preachers 487, increase 20; local preachers 6,550, decrease 262; chapels 1,149, increase 124.

Being an increase for the seven years of 25,569 members, 197 travelling preachers, 3,036 local preachers, and 590 chapels.

The number of Sabbath-school teachers and scholars was re-



ported for the first time in 1838, when there were 9,801 teachers, and 53,188 scholars. Through a misprint the number reported in the minutes of conference was 58,188. The number reported in 1839 was 11,015 teachers, and 55,838 scholars. The number in 1840 was 11,968 teachers, and 60,508 scholars: showing an encouraging increase both of teachers and scholars for the two years.

The number of deaths was first reported in 1835, when it amounted to 587. In 1836 the number was 668, in 1837, 873, in 1838, 830, in 1839, 837, and in 1840, 825; being 4620 in six years.

We conclude this chapter with the mention of a change in the appointment of General Committee Delegates to the respective district meetings, which gradually prepared the way for younger and more active brethren to take a larger share than theretofore in the management of important connexional affairs. The appointment of those delegates was originally with the General Committee; and Mr. Hugh Bourne was for many years regularly appointed to attend nearly all the district meetings; Mr. James Bourne frequently, and Mr. Clowes occasionally, attending one of them. And by the energy with which Mr. H. Bourne applied himself to this important department of connexional business he rendered eminent service to the community, promoting both its spiritual and financial interests. Notwithstanding occasional displays of hastiness of temper and errors in judgment he contributed to the connexional well-being in this line of business more than any other person in the community could have done.

But in 1839 he felt his physical energies to be abating,—and being no longer able to endure the toil of attending many important meetings in rapid succession, he recommended to the conference to appoint some of his junior brethren to atttend the district meetings of the next year. His recommendation was followed, and Mr. John Hallam was appointed to attend the Tunstall district meeting,—Mr. John Garner that of Nottingham, —Mr. W. Garner that of Hull,—Mr. Clowes that of Sunderland,—

Mr. John Garner that of Norwich,—Mr. John Flesher that of Manchester,—and Mr. H. Bourne that of Brinkworth. Mr. John Flesher was also appointed to represent the General Committee in the conference of 1840. These brethren were well qualified to sustain the important offices to which they were appointed, and they very efficiently discharged their respective duties. In the following chapter we shall find several of them called to take the chief management of connexional affairs, being raised to the highest offices of trust and responsibility in the denomination.



CHAPTER XVIII.

Fiery ordeal through which Tunstall Circuit passed—Great prosperity of Darlaston Circuit—Rapid progress of Dudley Circuit—Prosperity of Burland circuit—Enlargement of Wrockwardine Wood Circuit—Progress of Birmingham Circuit—Prosperity of Nottingham Circuit—Progress of Sheffield and Barnsley Circuits—Belper Circuit's missionary labours—Fulbeck Circuit's mission at Sleaford—Progress of Chesterfield, Leicester, Bottesford, and Derby Circuits—Hull Circuit—Bedford Mission—London and Sheerness—Encouraging progress in London—Mr. J. STAMP's exciting labours in Kent—Mr. G. STANSFIELD's imprisonment for holding religious services in the streets at Margate—Scotter Circuit sends a missionary to Alderney—Progress of Grimsby, Swinefleet, and Driffield Circuits—Leeds made the head of a District—Progress of Sunderland Circuit—Prosperity of Durham Circuit—Progress of Stockton Circuit—Fakenham Circuit's mission at Oundle—Upwell Circuit's mission at Saffron Walden—Missionary efforts at Ely and other neighbouring places—Prosperity of Wisbeech Circuit—Progress of Rockland Circuit—Progress of Manchester District—Prosperity of Brinkworth Circuit—Advancement of Motcombe Circuit—Frome Circuit's mission at Glastonbury and the neighbouring places—Progress of Salisbury Circuit—Advancement of Newbury Circuit—Missionary efforts and progress of Mitcheldever Circuit—Rev. W. THORNE's letters of remonstrance to Sir THOMAS BARING—Prosperity of Andover Circuit—Wallingford Circuit's missionary labours—Oxford made the head of a Circuit—Progress of Chippenham Circuit—Improvement and extension of Bath Circuit—Progress of Bristol Circuit—Progress of Reading Circuit—Missionary efforts in Hertfordshire—Progress of Aylesbury Circuit—Prosperity and enlargement of Banbury Circuit—Steps which led to the formation of a General Missionary Committee—Superannuation of Messrs. BOURNE and CLOWES—Removal of the Book establishment to London—The Executive of the General Missionary Committee—Progress of the Missions under its care—Progress of the Canadian Missions—Missions in the Eastern States of America—The formation and progress of a Primitive Methodist community in the Western States—Formation of societies in South Australia and New South Wales—Mr. R. WARD sent as a missionary to New Zealand—Brief statement of the Connexion's progress for ten years.

IN this chapter we purpose to narrate the progress of the connexion from the conference of 1840 to 1850. This was a period of considerable prosperity; for though during three years of it the connexion did not maintain its number of members, yet taking the whole decade a great addition was made to the societies, and several hundred chapels were erected for their accommodation.

The period was one of unprecedented trial to the oldest circuit in the connexion; but it came through the fiery ordeal in a manner which called for gratitude to Almighty God, and it was perhaps in a better state in 1850 than in 1840.

To the second circuit on the stations the decade was one of unprecedented prosperity. The number of members reported for Darlaston circuit for 1840 was 1,070, for the following year 1,120, for the next succeeding 1,150. In 1843 the number had risen to 1,300; but a panic in trade then occurred, which threw thousands of workmen out of employment, and caused numerous removals from the circuit; and in 1845 we find the number reduced to 1,009. In 1847 the number of members had risen to 1,210, and then three years of extraordinary prosperity followed. The increase for the first of these years was 280, and for the second 410. This large prosperity was attributable, under God, partly to missionary efforts in the large town of Wolverhampton, and at some other places. The society had previously but one chapel in this populous town, and that comparatively small; but the appointment of a town missionary was rendered successful in raising societies and establishing Sunday-schools in other parts of the town, which proved of considerable benefit.

Open-air services were likewise held in all parts of the circuit, and were successful in awakening many careless sinners from their spiritual slumbers, and in bringing them to the house of God. Most of the chapels became greatly crowded, many were necessarily enlarged, and several new ones were erected of considerable dimensions.

The progress of the Sabbath-schools kept pace with the enlargement of the societies and congregations, there being an increase



for the two years of 218 Sunday-school teachers and of 916 scholars; a goodly number of the latter having also given evidence of regenerating grace and been permitted to meet in class regularly, though not included in the number of members reported to conference.

This large accession to the societies and Sabbath-schools made the circuit too unwieldy for efficient management, and the duties of the superintendent far too onerous, the number of members having risen to 1,900, and that of Sabbath-scholars to above 4,000. Most of the office-bearers belonging to West Bromwich part of the circuit became solicitous for the places to which they belonged to be made into a separate station, but the majority connected with the other part refused consent. An appeal was therefore made to the annual conference of the connexion for its decision in the case, which, after ascertaining the numbers and strength of each part, unanimously agreed to make West Bromwich part into a new circuit; a decision which subsequent events proved to be highly beneficial to both parts.

At the June quarterly meeting of 1849, held at the close of the conference, the mother circuit had three travelling preachers, seventy local preachers and exhorters, 1,117 members of society, above 2,000 Sabbath-scholars, ten chapels, four large school-rooms, two rented preaching-rooms, and twenty-six places on its plan, two places more than were in the whole circuit in July, 1847. The new circuit had two travelling preachers, thirty local preachers and exhorters, 833 members of society, nearly 2,000 Sabbath scholars, nine chapels, and four large school-rooms.

Both circuits, though of limited extent, comprised a vast population. The mother circuit embraced Darlaston with 9,000 inhabitants, Bilston with 21,000, Wednesbury with nearly 20,000, Walsall with 30,000, Willenhall with 11,000, and Wolverhampton with 40,000. The new circuit was chiefly confined to the parishes of West Bromwich and Tipton; the former with a population of 30,000 souls, and the latter with above 20,000. In this densely inhabited district both circuits had sufficient scope for the exercise

of all the gifts and powers which they possessed, and the first year of their separation was one of glorious success. During the year the cholera raged fearfully through the vicinity, producing great consternation and alarm. Multitudes flocked to places of worship, and not a few were made possessors of Divine grace. We are unable to enter into details respecting the prosperity of Darlaston circuit, no account thereof for this year having ever been published, but we learn from the minutes of conference that the number of members reported for 1850 was 1,617, being an increase of 500 from the June quarterly meeting of 1849.

The new circuit happily made proportionate advancement. An additional preacher was immediately employed, ten new places were opened, most of which did well; a new chapel was erected at Lea Brook, one was taken on rent at Spon Lane, galleries were erected in Greet's Green chapel, an additional school-room was built at Prince's End, a preaching-room was taken on rent at Horsely Heath, three fresh schools were formed, nearly 300 scholars were added, and seventy teachers; and the members of society were reported at 1,100, being an increase for the year of 257. The number of members in the two circuits was 2,717, being nearly treble the number reported in 1840, and several hundreds more than double the number reported in 1847.

Stepping into the neighbouring circuit of Dudley, in the same populous district, we meet with almost equal prosperity. This circuit had more than doubled its members during the four preceding years, having risen from 620 in 1836 to 1,350 in 1840; and during the ten years under consideration it also made great progress. The first four years were marked by considerable advancement, then followed the panic in trade, to which reference has been made in our account of Darlaston circuit, and the number of members was reduced in 1845 to 1,224. In 1846 the number is not inserted in the minutes of conference. In 1847 it is reported at 1,200. The tide of prosperity now returned. In 1848 the number had risen to 1,320, and in 1849 to 1,620. The succeeding year, however, was still more prosperous. Tokens of large



success were everywhere apparent, and the societies were full of life and energy when the dreadful cholera began its fearful ravages, and filled with consternation and dismay multitudes who till then had lived in utter negligence of their eternal interests. The chapels were crowded night after night, and cries for mercy were heard from persons of all ages and various conditions in life. "Young men and maidens," aged matrons, and hoary-headed sires of three-score years and ten, were seen kneeling at the penitent bench, humbly supplicating pardoning mercy, and were afterwards heard to sing in joyous strains the praises of their God and Saviour. Some persons of decent morals, and in comfortable worldly circumstances, were found among the new converts, and many of a very different character, and in widely different circumstances; abandoned drunkards, card-players, prize-fighters, and even thieves and harlots became trophies of Divine grace, and evinced much zeal in the service of their new Master. In some instances almost whole families were converted to God, and gangs of evil-doers were broken up; the major part of them having been brought to the Saviour ceased to do evil, and learned to do well. In scores of families a delightful change was apparent. Sobriety and industry, peace and concord, domestic order, cleanliness and comfort, took the place of intemperance and sloth, brawls and contentions, poverty and filth, misery and degradation. Most of those who experienced the power of regenerating grace united in church-fellowship, and consequently great accessions were made to most of the societies. Death, indeed, hurried a goodly number of the members into the world of spirits, some of them very suddenly, in a few hours after they had been praying with their afflicted and dying neighbours; yet after filling up the vacancies occasioned by these translations to the Church above, and making prudent deductions on account of the great influx of persons into the churches under such exciting circumstances, the December quarterly meeting of 1849 found 2300 members, being an increase of 600 for the preceding six months. During this short period great improvements had also been effected in several

of the chapels; a new one had been completed at Round's Green, a gallery had been erected in Sedgley, Hale's Owen, and Dudley chapels. Old Hill chapel was undergoing enlargement, and a school-room twenty yards long and eight wide had been erected at Brierley Hill. On reviewing the history of the circuit from its formation in 1832 to that time, 1849, it was found that its increase of members had averaged 100 a year, its chapels had been doubled in number, its local preachers had become three-fold, its Sabbath scholars had risen from 977 to 3000, and the quarterly income of the circuit had so augmented that it now amounted to £120. A review so pleasing could not but excite emotions of gratitude to the Author of all good; but a calm consideration of the weight and importance to which the circuit had arrived, and the tremendous responsibility arising from the care of many hundred new converts, and the necessity of erecting about half a dozen additional chapels, and of enlarging several others, led to the conclusion that though the circuit was but of limited extent, only about eight miles long and about the same in width, the proper time for making it into two had arrived. This was happily arranged in a very friendly and satisfactory manner. Eleven chapels, two rented preaching-rooms, two travelling preachers, fifty local preachers, and 1185 members were assigned to Dudley circuit; and two travelling preachers, ten chapels, two rented preaching-rooms, fifty local preachers, and 1200 members to Brierley Hill circuit. To the conference of 1850 Dudley circuit reported 1150 members, and Brierley Hill circuit 1230. The mining district of South Staffordshire, though but of comparatively few miles extent, now contained four circuits, above forty chapels, and more than 7000 Sabbath scholars, and 5000 members of society.

Other circuits in Tunstall district made considerable progress during the decade of years now under consideration, but we must only notice one or two of them. Burland circuit rose from 1000 members in 1840 to 1373 in 1850, notwithstanding the transfer of Northampton mission to the General Missionary Committee;

and Wrockwardine Wood circuit enlarged its borders by successful missionary operations. The populous parish of Dawley, in the mining district of Shropshire, was visited by the preachers of this circuit, under the successful superintendency of Mr. John Moore, and great good was effected. Previous efforts to establish societies in this and the neighbouring parishes of Madeley and Brosely had been comparatively fruitless: but in 1839 a rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit was graciously vouchsafed to the societies at the places in Wrockwardine Wood circuit, which were contiguous to Dawley, and the friends were thereby encouraged and prepared to make another and more vigorous effort to establish regular preaching in that populous parish. Lawley Bank, Dawley Green, Little Dawley, Horsehays, and Hinkshays, were respectively visited, as well as Colebrook Dale, and some other places in Madeley parish, the scene of the apostolic labours of the seraphic Fletcher. At most of these places sinners were awakened, penitents comforted, and societies formed; but the greatest good was effected at Dawley Green, a district densely inhabited by persons mostly engaged in the coal and iron trade. A small society was established here previous to the December quarterly meeting of 1839, but in the following year it rose to considerable strength, and in due time a chapel was erected in a good situation, and a flourishing Sabbath-school established. In December, 1845, the respective societies previously named, and some others in the immediate neighbourhood, comprised about 150 members. Dawley soon afterwards became the head of a branch, and the principal places in Wenlock circuit becoming attached thereto the whole was some years ago formed into a separate station, under the name of Dawley circuit.

Other parts of Wrockwardine Wood circuit also made encouraging progress. New chapels were erected at Eaton, Tibberton, and Shebdon, in agricultural parishes where High Church influence and Puseyitical doctrines and practices were prevalent. Another was erected at Hadley, and one at Oakengates, which proved very prosperous in all respects. It was soon afterwards

demolished by the Birmingham and Shrewsbury railway company; but a handsome remuneration was given to the trustees, which enabled them to erect a much larger one in a prominent and delightful situation, and to place it in easy circumstances.

Birmingham circuit likewise made some advancement. Many occurrences had hitherto hindered the prosperity of the societies in this large town, and they continued small and feeble. But the generous aid afforded by the late J. Wright, Esq., of Sparkbrook, enabled the brethren to devote considerable time to missionary operations in the town, which were productive of an encouraging amount of good, and resulted in the formation of some new societies, and in the improvement of others. We cannot enter into details, and must conclude this brief notice by stating that the number of members rose from about 340 in 1840 to about 750 in 1850; having more than doubled the number in the ten years. This encouraging improvement had mostly been realized during the last four years, under the superintendency of Mr. H. Leech.

We must now briefly record the progress of Nottingham district. We begin with Nottingham circuit. In 1840 the number of members was reported at 925. In 1841 they had become 1,000, in 1844, 1173, in 1845, 1279. In 1846 the circuit was divided into two, Nottingham South, and Nottingham North. In 1850 the number of members in both circuits amounted to 1715, nearly double the number reported in 1840. Many chapels were erected during this period, and several Sabbath-schools formed but we are unable to record the particulars for lack of information.

It is gratifying to find another large town in this district making similar progress. In 1840 Sheffield circuit reported 466 members; in 1850 the number had risen to 967. A correspondent improvement had also taken place in chapels, congregations, and Sabbath-schools.

Barnsley circuit also rose from 557 members in 1840 to 865 in 1850; this increase of members was mainly secured during the last three years, under the superintendency of Mr. Wornsop, and Mr. Penrose.



The missionary efforts of two country circuits claim a brief notice. Belper circuit reported 664 members in 1840, but in 1842 it was reduced to 601; Selston, Normanton, and Portland Row, having, probably during these two years, been transferred to another circuit. In the following year they were restored to Belper circuit, and with Summercotes and Golden Valley they formed the nucleus of a mission station, to which Mr. E. Morton was appointed in April, 1843. It may be proper to remark that the three former places had been greatly injured by an unhappy division three or four years previously, and were now almost a wreck. It is to the honour of Mr. John Smith, of Golden Valley, that we have to record that his fidelity to the connexion in this time of trial, and the influence of his respectable character and position, were of incalculable service. A better day now began to dawn upon these suffering places, and Mr. Morton also succeeded in establishing societies at Crich, Swanwick, Green Hillocks, and other places, where chapels were in due time erected. In 1850 this mission contained 283 members, and in the following year was made into an independent station, now called Ripley circuit, a very compact and comfortable station. It is gratifying to add, that notwithstanding the formation of this station, Belper circuit reported 811 members in 1850, 147 more than in 1840.

Fulbeck circuit made a fourth attempt to establish a cause in the town of Sleaford, Lincolnshire, in April, 1840. Preaching was commenced in the open-air, in the market-place, when several hundred persons assembled, and listened attentively to the truths delivered. Encouraged by the number of attentive hearers which assembled from week to week, the brethren continued to conduct open-air services till the weather became too cold for the purpose. A house was then taken on rent in Westgate, and fitted up with seats, pulpit, and other conveniences, and opened for worship in November. The opening services were beneficial, and honoured with the conversion of one soul or more. A Sabbath-school was commenced, and a society formed of about twenty members. A new chapel was subsequently erected,—and

in 1843 Sleaford had become the head of a circuit, having a branch at Newark.

A bare statistical statement of the progress of a few other circuits must close our present notice of this district. Chesterfield circuit rose from 418 members in 1840, to 713 in 1850. Leicester circuit made East Shilton, now Hinckley circuit, into a circuit, and yet had nearly as many members in 1850 as in 1840. Botteeford circuit rose from 183 members in 1840 to 486 in 1850. And Derby circuit about doubled its number of members, having risen from 360 in 1840 to 716 in 1850. These numbers indicate a measures of prosperity calling for gratitude to Him from whom all good proceeds, and to whom all praise belongs.

The period under consideration in this chapter was one of unusual importance to Hull circuit. Some painful occurrences transpired in the town, which however were succeeded by rich out-pourings of the Holy Spirit and a great enlargement of the work of God. But before we narrate these occurrences we must record some of the missionary operations of the circuit in the South of England. We begin with Bedford mission. Nottingham circuit, during the period of agitation noticed in the foregoing chapter, sent a missionary to Bedford; but his suitability for the ministry was questioned by many of the leading friends, and the General Committee declined to sanction his continuance. He, however, refused to return to Nottingham, or to relinquish the office into which he had been unwisely put, and was, therefore, left to his own resources. He endeavoured to establish societies called "Independent Primitive Methodists." He struggled for a few years, but with little success, and then applied to Hull circuit to receive him as a preacher, and take charge of his societies. The conference of 1839, after some hesitation, gave its sanction, and he was received as a probationer. Another preacher was appointed to asssit him on the Bedford mission. Unhappily they could not agree, and the societies were divided, some being for one of the preachers and some for the other. To restore tranquility, and otherwise promote the good of the mission, both preachers



were removed, and two others were sent in their places,—Mr. Jeremiah Dodsworth being appointed the superintendent. He and his colleague laboured, with apparent success, to unite the divided societies and to promote prosperity; but had soon to meet with fresh difficulties and discouragements. The preacher first sent to Bedford having left the connexion returned thither publicly to vilify it, and to draw away as many of the members as he could. He succeeded in creating considerable prejudice against the community, and in attracting to himself a number of his former friends, whom he again united in Church fellowship under his own care. But Mr. Dodsworth and his colleague maintained their ground, and pushed forward their missionary operations. During the three years' superintendency of Mr. Dodsworth a few places were successfully visited, among which were Stevington, Colmworth, and Elstow, the birth-place of the celebrated John Bunyan,—the house in which he pursued his humble calling being the dwelling in which the missionaries conducted Divine service. An agreement was also made for a site of land for a chapel at Oakley, and an encouraging sum of money subscribed towards it, and deposited by Mr. Dodsworth with the proper authorities, though through some untoward circumstances, calling for the exercise of patience from the trustees and friends, the chapel was not erected till seven years afterwards. At the close of his ministry at Bedford Mr. Dodsworth had the gratification of leaving on the mission near a hundred members more than he found. During the second year of his labours there he had been favoured with the zealous co-operation of Mr. Charles Parker, of whose services he makes honourable mention in an article on Bedford mission, published in the connexional magazine. The mission was about stationary for several years afterwards, and then made some progress during the superintendency of Mr. J. Parrott; when the chapel before-mentioned was built at Oakley, and another at Colmworth,—and Bedford chapel was re-built on a greatly enlarged scale. Yet the number of members in 1850 was only 173. To prevent further reference to this mission we may

add that subsequently it made some encouraging progress; and in March, 1857, we find it a separate circuit, or independent station. In 1860 it had so progressed as to be able to report 377 members, more than double the number reported in 1850.

Going southwards to the metropolis we find London and Sheerness again under the fostering care of Hull circuit. The difficulties of the London circuit rendered foreign aid desirable; and between the conference of 1834 and that of 1835 the authorities at Hull generously undertook to render efficient assistance. The appointment of Mr. John Flesher to London, as superintendent of the mission, was a prudent arrangement, and highly beneficial in its results. His wisdom and piety, even more than his eloquence, contributed, under God, to produce effectual relief in one or more cases of serious embarrassment, and to effect a great improvement in all respects. His colleagues also laboured with zeal and encouraging success. The number of members reported for London circuit in 1834 was only 260. In 1844, when the number was next published in the minutes of the conference, it had risen to 466, and the Kentish missions were then distinct. In 1845 they had increased to 616.

Considering the up-hill work connected with establishing new societies in London a vast amount of toil must have been spent to secure this encouraging improvement; and the acceptable and zealous labours of Messrs. Sanderson, Holliday, Harland, and Ride, and their respective colleagues, as well as those of Mr. Flesher and his fellow-labourers, merit a grateful mention, though we cannot narrate them in detail. In 1847 the number had become 816. The following year London was again made into an independent station with 710 members, Hammersmith mission having been separated from it during the year, which accounts for the diminution in the number of members. Mr. G. Austin was then the superintendent, and his persevering and zealous labours were rendered eminently successful in promoting the further advancement of the cause, in which he was favoured with the hearty co-operation of his colleagues, and of the office-bearers, and so-



cieties in general. In 1850 the circuit was divided into two, London First circuit having 659 members, and the Second 333, nearly 1,000 in the two. Considering the early struggles of the connexion in London, and the slow progress it made for many years, it is no wonder that the recent advancement excited no small measure of gratitude and joy among the friends. In the next chapter we shall have to record still further progress in this vast city.

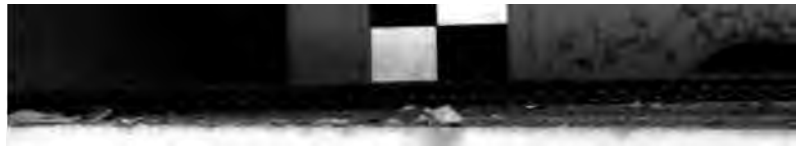
Advancing still further southward, in the beautiful and fertile county of Kent, we find Sheerness and Canterbury mission under the care of Hull circuit. The progress of the Kentish mission had not been great, though considerable sums had been expended thereon. Yet after Hull circuit took the mission a second time under its care the work was carried on with increased vigour, and hopes were entertained of greater success than had before been realized. The mission had improved materially when the late Mr. John Stamp was appointed to labour thereon, in the year 1838. He was in some respects an extraordinary man,—being as remarkable for the weakness of his judgment as for the greatness of his declamatory powers. His enterprising spirit, and his influence over popular assemblies, caused considerable excitement among the Kentish people, and for a time the mission appeared to be prospering rapidly. Before the conference of 1840 Sheerness was made into a separate circuit, with Mr. Stamp for its superintendent, for the office of which he was utterly incompetent. His lack of discretion, and his rash and headstrong proceedings, soon involved the circuit in serious difficulties, and nearly completed its ruin. A series of charges was preferred against him by several of the office-bearers of the circuit, and a deputation from the General Committee examined matters on the spot, taking in writing the evidence against him, and his reply to the whole. When this official document came before the conference of 1841 it was the opinion of that assembly that Mr. Stamp was altogether unfit for the office of a travelling preacher, and he was therefore discontinued. Sheerness circuit could no longer bear up under

the difficulties which his improper proceedings had occasioned, and was taken again under the maternal care of Hull circuit; but the kindness of Hull friends in this respect brought upon them severe trials from Mr. Stamp, who repaired to that town, and began a course of slander which few men in their senses could have pursued. Public meetings were convened in his behalf; and a local periodical, long since extinct, espoused his cause, and admitted into its columns all manner of calumny against the connexion, and much violent abuse of its leading men at Hull. The brethren concerned lived down the cruel aspersions cast upon them,—and the inhabitants justly venerate the memory of those of them who have departed hence. But for a time Mr. Stamp and his advocates made an unfavourable impression upon a portion of the public; and twenty persons or more withdrew from the society. Among these were some whom it proved a great benefit to lose; but others were sincere and pious, and being misled by the false representations of Mr. Stamp, were more to be pitied than blamed. A church was formed under the pastoral care of Mr. Stamp, a good chapel was erected for him within a short distance of West Street. But Mr. Stamp's pastorate was not of long continuance; confusion and financial embarassment soon broke up his church, and occasioned the sale of the chapel. Days of humiliation speedily overtook him, and serious disappointments chequered his short and eccentric career. He died several years ago, a wiser and a better man, charity would hope, than he was in the height of his popularity, when vanity and show were affectingly visible to pious and discerning minds. But the injuries inflicted on the stations in which he laboured were not easily or soon repaired. In Louth circuit, where he began his public career, the embarrassment and distress caused by his rashness and self-will in erecting chapels, without title-deeds or trustees, or any reasonable prospect of them being supported, were relieved by the generous conduct of Mr. W. Byron, who purchased many of the erections, and in various ways sought to assist the suffering cause. But in Kent the wound inflicted upon

the young and feeble societies was deep and painful. Years of toil and persevering labour have not sufficed to repair the injuries in some places. Hull circuit, however, continued to prosecute the mission in Kent with zeal and vigour, and when transferred to the care of the General Missionary Committee in 1843 there were four stations occupied, namely, Sheerness, Ramsgate and Margate, Maidstone, and Canterbury.

Mr. George Stansfield was appointed to Ramsgate and Margate in 1842, and laboured zealously to repair the breaches which had been made, and to promote the prosperity of the mission. For this purpose he had recourse to open-air services, according to the usages of the connexion. But the magistrates of Margate were determined to prevent these well-meant efforts in that town. On the 5th of March, 1843, Mr. Stansfield and a few friends sang through several streets, and occasionally stood a few minutes to deliver a brief exhortation and to offer up a short prayer, by which means many persons habitually neglectful of religious worship were induced to attend the preaching-room in the evening,—and the prospect of good resulting from these labours was cheering. But on the 7th Mr. Stansfield was served with a warrant for having committed a nuisance by these pious exercises, and cited to appear before the magistrates at the Town Hall. On the day appointed he attended, and pleaded his own cause in a crowded court. He admitted that if preaching, praying, and singing in the streets were a nuisance he had committed one; but argued that he had violated no law, and stated that his sole object was to do good, that he had pursued a similar course in many towns in England, and had never before been interrupted; that in his last station, Whitby, in Yorkshire, he had been accompanied in these efforts by a magistrate, and that the community to which he belonged had recourse to these measures, with a view to awaken attention to religion among multitudes who unhappily were unmindful of it. His address produced a deep impression, and elicited warm expressions of applause from the crowded court, which, however, the authorities deemed proper to suppress. After

his defence the magistrates retired for deliberation; and on their return a clerical magistrate, the rector of St. Peter's, amidst high professions of regard for religious liberty, announced that Mr. Stansfield should be fined a shilling, and pay the expenses amounting to 6s. 6d., or in default of payment to be sent to Dover jail for seven days! Whether the reverend gentleman would have deemed it in accordance with religious liberty for certain processions among the clergy, or the military band playing through the streets to his own church, to be punished by fine or imprisonment is another question. He and his brother magistrates, however, made a show of leniency; as Mr. Stansfield objected on principle to pay either fine or expenses, they allowed him a week to consider of it, instead of committing him to prison at once. He left the court with a calm determination to suffer incarceration rather than to pay what he deemed an unrighteous fine, though trivial in amount; and as his views underwent no change during the specified period, the day after its expiration he was conducted to Dover jail. From his dignified appearance and gentlemanly bearing some of the prisoners thought he was come to inspect the prison; when to their astonishment they learned that he was to be confined as a criminal for having preached, and prayed, and sung in the streets. Their veneration for the magistrates of the land was not enhanced by this circumstance, and they hesitated not to express in strong terms their sense of the injustice of Mr. Stansfield's treatment. The jailer, too, sympathised with him in the wrong inflicted upon him, and did all in his power to alleviate the hardships of the case. Mr. Stansfield interested himself in the welfare of his fellow-prisoners, and sought especially to promote their spiritual interests. They highly appreciated his well-meant efforts, were delighted with his society, promised amendment of life, and were deeply affected when he bade them farewell. He had been graciously supported by a sense of the Divine presence while in jail, and rejoiced in suffering for the honour of his Divine Master; but when the period of his incarceration had elapsed he gratefully retured to his family and to the scene of his



labours,—a gentleman, one of his fellow-passengers, generously paying his coach fare from Dover to Ramsgate.

The further progress of these mission stations, and the formation of others in the same county, will be noticed in connection with the labours of the General Missionary Committee.

In the town of Hull the injury inflicted by the conduct of Mr. Stamp was not of long continuance. West street chapel had become too small for the congregation in 1841, when a chapel in Mason Street formerly occupied by the Baptists was purchased, and opened for worship by the connexion about the time that Mr. Stamp made an attempt to establish a cause in the town. This chapel soon became well filled, a flourishing society was established in it, and large and substantial school-rooms were erected behind it for the accommodation of hundreds of Sabbath scholars. Town missionary operations were also conducted with vigour, and were rendered useful to a considerable extent. They began in a systematic manner about Christmas, 1838, one preacher being regularly appointed to the work, and were continued for a number of years with more or less success.

In 1844 the societies in the town had acquired such strength and importance, that it was deemed prudent to divide them between the west and east branches.

In 1846 a small chapel in Church Street, in the parish of Sculcoates, in the east branch, having become far too small for the congregation was pulled down, and a larger one erected in its place; making the third chapel of respectable size in the town of Hull.

Meanwhile, the chapel in West Street was crowded, and an additional one was needed in that part of the town. One was accordingly taken on rent in Nile Street, till a large and elegant one was erected in Great Thornton Street in 1849, at the cost of above £2,000. This chapel stands in a very prominent position, in the midst of a rapidly increasing population, and was soon attended by a large congregation. The progress of the societies was in proportion to the erection of chapels. In 1850

the west branch reported 1,430 members, and the east 870, and fourteen or fifteen hundred of this number belonged to the town's societies. In this brief sketch of ten years' progress of Hull circuit we have studied condensation to the utmost, and have omitted to detail the labours of numerous brethren which might have been interesting to our readers, could we have afforded space for the narration. Honourable mention might have been made of the acceptable and successful services of Messrs. Sanderson, Bywater, Harland, and Lamb, and of most of their colleagues in the home branch, as well as of others in the rest of the branches of the circuit, had not a due regard to brevity forbidden it. Here we must close for the present our notice of Hull circuit.

Scotter circuit next claims our attention. We are unable to narrate at large its progress from the year 1840 to 1850, and must content ourselves with a very brief notice of some of its missionary operations. Having taken charge of the Norman Isles mission it sent Mr. J. Scarborough as a missionary to Alderney, in the Autumn of 1839. The island then contained only about a thousand inhabitants, and a church and a Wesleyan chapel were opened every Lord's day for their accommodation. Great success, and the establishment of a large society under these circumstances, could hardly be expected. The missionary did not, however, labour in vain. He began to preach in the open-air, and large congregations attended his ministry. A suitable room was in due time secured, and a society formed of those who had obtained spiritual good. The March quarterly accounts for 1841, about six months after the mission was commenced, show that there were twenty-nine members in society, and that the income exceeded the expenditure,—the missionary being a single man, and the seat rents of the room or chapel affording a considerable surplus in favour of the mission funds.

For some time after this the mission was stationary; and in 1844 it and the missions in the neighbouring islands of Jersey and Guernsey were transferred to the care of the General Mis-



sionary Committee. We have nothing further to record in this chapter concerning the progress of Scotter circuit; and with a simple statement of the progress of a few other stations, and of the formation of a new district, we must close our present notice of Hull district. We find Grimsby circuit making great advancement. In 1840 it numbered 660 members, in 1850 it reported 1,227, included 397 in Market Rasen Branch, having nearly doubled its number of members in the ten years. Swinefleet circuit appears to have made greater proportionate progress than this. In 1840 it contained only 363 members, in 1850 it reported 832, including 152 in Selby branch, having more than doubled its number of members in the ten years. And Driffield circuit made encouraging advancement, though not equal to that of the two just named. In 1840 it numbered 929 members, in 1850 it reported 833 for the home branch, 177 for Hornsea branch, and 360 for Bridlington branch, 1,370 in all,—being an increase of 441 for the ten years.

Leeds circuit made some advancement; and as Hull district had become inconveniently large, in 1845 it was divided into two, and Leeds made the head of the new district. In 1850 we find Leeds circuit had been divided into two; the first having 787 members, and the second 565. Historic fidelity requires us to add that the neighbouring circuits in this populous district made little or no advancement during the ten years to which this chapter refers, a circumstance to be deeply deplored.

Sunderland circuit made great progress during the decade of years we are now reviewing. In 1840 it reported 920 members, and in 1850 the number had risen to 1,623. The details of this prosperity would be interesting and encouraging; but we regret our inability to supply them, and are obliged to content ourselves with this bare statistical account.

Of the progress of Durham circuit, made from Sunderland circuit in September, 1838, with 373 members, we are able to write more largely. The first year of this new circuit was a prosperous one, the members being reported at 477, showing an increase of

104; in 1841 the members had risen to 544; and in 1842 they had become 723. In 1843 this great number was more than doubled, no fewer than 1,500 members being reported. This extraordinary increase may perhaps partly be accounted for from the commencement of new colleries, and the influx of members from other stations; but the chief cause was the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the unconverted and impenitent. From an article published in the denominational magazine for 1843, it appears that a great revival of religion began at Kelloe, which soon afterwards extended to many other places. A new colliery had been begun at that village about the year 1839; and in three years afterwards the inhabitants numbered about 1,500 persons. A society existed from the commencement of the colliery; but in the beginning of December, 1842, the members were convened for the purpose of consulting about the measures they ought to adopt in order to promote the salvation of their neighbours. At this meeting it was agreed that each should spend a portion of every day in private prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the village, and that united efforts should be employed to awaken the attention of sinners to a proper concern for thir eternal well-being. Open-air services were forthwith held in the streets, though in the winter season, and many of the inhabitants were thereby aroused from their spiritual slumbers and began to inquire what they must do to be saved. One person found peace at a prayer-meeting on the 8th of the month, and six others on the 11th. A second meeting of the society was convened on the 23rd, to consider what further steps should be taken with a view to do good. One of the brethren recommended that all the families in the place should be visited, instructed in religious matters, and prayed with. This recommendation was approved, and with a view to carry it out the village was divided into districts, and two persons appointed to each. On the 26th this courageous resolution was fulfilled as far as practicable; every house in the village was visited, but some of the families would not permit prayer to be offered up with them, and others, terror-

stricken at the mention of it, fled from their dwellings, leaving them in possession of their pious and benevolent visitors. But many received the visits gratefully, wept on account of their sinful course of life, and promised to begin to serve the Lord. At night there was preaching, numbers attended, and many found salvation. On Sunday, January 1st, 1843, many more penitents were made happy in the love of God, and a prayer-meeting was held every night in the week, at which cries for mercy were heard, mingled with songs of thanksgiving and rejoicing for the wondrous displays of saving grace. The second week in the new year was equally successful, and the third much the same. From December 8th, 1842, to January 23rd, 1843, 216 persons were brought to the Lord at this village. About sixty of this number were boys and girls, chiefly belonging to the Sabbath-school. Many of the rest had been notorious for all manner of wickedness, and the reformation which took place in their conduct was so great that the improvement of morals in the village was astonishing. "A similar work," says the writer, "is breaking out in divers parts of the circuit." Revivals of religion like this, so powerful and extensive, will account for the extraordinary increase of members previously mentioned. The whole district, too, appears to have shared in these rich effusions of the Holy Spirit. In a brief report of the district meeting held at the beginning of May it is said, "We record our gratitude to God for those gracious out-pourings of his Holy Spirit which have been vouchsafed to most of the circuits. Besides having made up the deficiencies occasioned by removals, backslidings, and deaths, we are enabled to report an increase of 1984 members."

It is painful to record a serious declension after this powerful revival. Many things contributed to injure the work of God in Durham circuit. Many who had been deeply impressed during the excitement connected with the revival soon relapsed into their former state of indifference to religious matters. Then followed the unhallowed agitations produced by the public orations of an expelled minister from another community, who, in a style and

manner most likely to prevail with weak minds, sought to bring all connexional institutions into disrepute, and to persuade his hearers that all Christian ministers were mere hirelings, and that there was no scriptural warrant for rendering them support. This gentleman was then fast verging towards open infidelity, but having not as yet made profession of his disbelief of the Bible, he had the more power over multitudes, whom he unhappily turned from evangelical truth, and led them to dissolve their connexion with the churches of their earliest choice. Next followed an unhappy difference between the pitmen and their employers. Thousands were thrown out of work, and were ejected from their dwellings, which were the property of their employers, and hundreds had to place their furniture under hedges in the roads and lanes, and live their for a time for lack of other shelter. It is not within the scope of our design to discuss the merits of this unhappy contest between the pitmen and their masters. We state the painful facts merely to shew how they militated against the work of God and the welfare of religious societies.

The different causes we have just named continued in operation for some time, and combined to reduce the number of members so greatly in Durham circuit that in June, 1847, there were only 520. A re-action, however, soon took place. The agitations subsided, the societies gradually recovered their strength, and during the three years of Mr. Lister's superintendency the number of members increased 373, a correspondent improvement having been realized in all other departments of the work. In 1849 Mr. Lister and his colleagues were succeeded by Messrs. Sampson Turner, W. Clemitson, and W. Saul, and the ensuing year was one of marked prosperity. The number of members reported to the conference of 1850 was 1,108, being more than double the number found in 1840.

Stockton-upon-Tees circuit likewise made considerable advancement between the year 1840 and that of 1850. In the former year it numbered only 300 members, in the latter it reported 531, including 87 in Guisborough branch. The rising seaport towns of



Middlesborough and Hartlepool, being seats of commercial activity, caused a great influx of inhabitants, among which were some active members of the Primitive Methodists, who partly contributed to the improvement of the circuit. And missionary labours at Guisborough, Skelton, and other places, were partially successful, though the first-named place had previously been tried at different times, with little or no success. Now, however, a permanent establishment was effected, and Guisborough became the head of a branch.

In the town of Stockton a circumstance occurred in the autumn of 1844, which threatened at first to impede the progress of the society, but which eventually proved beneficial in a considerable degree. The preachers had long been accustomed to preach at the Cross at five o'clock on Sunday afternoon, being careful to conclude the service before the churches and chapels were opened for Divine worship in the evening. But the spread of Puseyitical notions or of High Church principles, among certain persons belonging to the Establishment, caused complaints to be made to the mayor about these open-air services; and his worship immediately sent a policeman to inform Mr. Clemitson, the superintendent minister, that preaching at the Cross must be discontinued. Mr. Clemitson inquired of a respectable solicitor whether there were any local act which forbade open-air preaching, and was assured that there was not. He therefore repaired to the Cross on the following Sabbath, and conducted service there as before. The rumour about the mayor's interference had spread among the inhabitants, and a much larger congregation than usual assembled. Policemen were also present; but it would have required more than ordinary courage on their part to have interrupted the minister, surrounded closely as he was, by a large and respectable audience. The service was concluded in peace, and a large assembly afterwards met in chapel to hear the preacher, who, in the discharge of his duty towards his Maker, had dared to disobey the mandate of the mayor. Next day, however, his worship issued a summons, requiring the insubordinate minister to appear before

the magistrates on the following Saturday, to answer for his disregard of his authority. Mr. Clemitson was from home when the summons was delivered, and when he returned on the Wednesday following, he was informed that the solicitor whom he had consulted had heard of the summons being served, and had been to his house to see it, and had taken it away with him. A respectable gentleman belonging to the Society of Friends, hearing of the circumstance, requested an interwiew with Mr. C.; and after inquiring into his motives for preaching at the Cross, and whether he touched on political subjects, whether he felt bound in duty to his Divine Master to continue the practice, and whether he had reason to believe that good resulted from his labours,—and being answered to his satisfaction, he encouraged Mr. Clemitson to meet the magistrates without fear, and to refuse to pay any fine which might be imposed upon him. He also promised that able counsel should be provided for his defence, and that the liberty of preaching at the Cross should be maintained if possible. He and R. Walker, Esq., a wealthy gentleman of the Wesleyan denomination, united in enlisting the sympathies of the respectable inhabitants, and in obtaining their signatures to a document testifying that they did not regard the open-air services of the Primitive Methodists as interrupting the peace and order of the town, and requesting that no obstruction should be thrown in the way of their well-meant efforts. Mr. Walker, especially, was resolved that no needful expense should be spared to prevent persecuting principles from being carried out in Stockton, and he wrote a letter of remonstrance to the mayor, declaring his determination to defend to the utmost religious liberty and the rights of conscience. Such was the weight of influence exerted in favour of open-air preaching, that his worship durst not face it, and deemed it prudent to withdraw his opposition. An hour before the time at which Mr. Clemitson had been summoned to appear at the Town Hall the mayor sent him word that as the case would not come on it would not be necessary for him to appear. Mr. C., however, thought it best to obey the written summons rather than



the verbal message, and at the appointed hour repaired to the hall, but found no admission. The excitement had attracted vast numbers to the spot, and the joy was great when it was ascertained that the magistrates durst not interfere with the open-air religious services of the humble preachers. This unsuccessful attempt on the part of the mayor was overruled for the good of the society, as it awakened considerable sympathy in its behalf, and tended to increase the congregations.

We find nothing worthy of record respecting the other stations in the district during the period under consideration; and we need only add that the increase of members in the district was 2,287, the number reported in 1840 being 8,043, and that in 1850 being 10,330.

In glancing at Norwich district we see a few of the circuits conducting missionary operations in different counties, and others progressing in their respective localities. In 1842 we find Mr. W. Batley stationed on a mission belonging to Fakenham circuit, at Oundle, in Northamptonshire. In the town of Oundle the mission was not successful; but at the populous village of Brigstock great good was effected. Numbers of sinners were turned to the Lord; a flourishing society was established, and a suitable chapel speedily erected. Good was likewise done at a few other places; but the mission on the whole was not very successful, and was subsequently transferred to the General Missionary Committee, by whom it was annexed to the Northampton station.

Upwell, now Downham, circuit conducted more successful missionary operations in the county of Essex. At the March quarterly meeting of 1838 Messrs. B. Redhead and J. Jackson were appointed to missionary work, but the sphere of their operations was left to their own choice, the meeting not being able to select a locality to its own satisfaction. About the end of the following month these brethren started on their errand of mercy. At the close of their first day's journey they arrived at Saffron Walden, in Essex, forty miles from the place they had left. Next morning they found that it was a country town of some importance; and

on making inquiries they ascertained that there was no Methodism there nor in the neighbouring villages. Conceiving that a fine field for usefulness presented itself before them, they at once determined to begin to cultivate it. On the 2nd of May, 1839, Mr. Redhead preached in the open-air, in Castle Street, Saffron Walden, to an attentive congregation, though open-air preaching was unusual in that town. On the following evening the missionaries visited Little Walden, and preached to a company of persons who listened with attention.

On Sunday morning, May 4th, Mr. Redhead preached in Saffron Walden market-place, to a large congregation. In the afternoon he and Mr. Jackson visited Debden, where a large assembly was convened, and where they proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation with good effect. In the evening Mr. Redhead preached to a large congregation on the common near Saffron Walden, and Mr. Jackson to a small one at Wimbish. The brethren soon extended their labours to other villages; the following places were early favoured with their zealous ministrations:—Saffron Walden, Little Walden, Debden, Ashden, Radwinter, Wimbish, Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford, Newport, Hadstock, Arksden, and Chrishall. At first their services were all conducted in the open-air; and like their brethren in other portions of the missionary field, they endured much exhausting toil in their efforts to supply the places with preaching as frequently as possible. They often walked fifteen or twenty miles on the Lord's day, and preached three times in the open-air. On Sunday, May 25th, Mr. Jackson did more than this. He preached at Dibden in the morning, at Wimbish in the afternoon, at Radwinter at five o'clock, and at half-past seven at Ashden. The last service was held in a barn, and was eminently effective; the others were in the open-air, and the distance the preacher had to walk was above twenty miles. He and his colleague, however, were cheered under their exhausting labours by the evidences of spiritual good effected thereby. An encouraging number of persons was early brought under religious impressions, penitently sought salvation through Jesus Christ,



and became united in church fellowship under the pastoral care of the missionaries. At Saffron Walden a small chapel formerly occupied by the Wesleyans was taken on rent, and opened for religious worship on the 30th of June. A society was formed there, and at most of the places before-mentioned, and the work of God gradually progressed. The first missionaries met with no violent persecution, they were generally favoured with a courteous reception; and though no striking incidents marked their course, a considerable amount of good was effected by their zealous labours and persevering efforts. The expense of the mission appears, however, to have exceeded the anticipations of the circuit authorities. In the report for 1841 it is said, "Our financial department has improved very much, otherwise we could not have met our very heavy expenses; for our mission during the two years has cost the circuit £65." This statement will excite a smile with many persons: £65 expended on the maintenance of two missionaries for two years, being regarded as very heavy expenses! But most of the missions in the connexion had cost much less than this, and many of them had become self-supporting in less time than two years. Hence the very serious manner in which the circuit evidently regarded the expenditure on this mission.

In January, 1843, when Mr. E. Rust entered upon the mission, there were two travelling preachers, eight local preachers, eight preaching places, and eighty-two members in society. During the two years and a half of Mr. Rust's continuance on the mission the work progressed more rapidly than before. A camp-meeting held at Chrishall was a means of reviving the society there, and the congregation so increased that the preaching place had to be enlarged. Through the Divine blessing attendant on a protracted meeting at Clavering, conducted by Mr. R. Eaglen, a revival of religion took place, and many souls were brought to the Saviour. A neat chapel was soon afterwards erected there. At Hempstead, the native place of Turpin, the notorious highwayman, the grace of God was displayed in the salvation of some who almost equalled him in daring wickedness. At other places considerable good

was effected. "During my abode among the dear people of this mission," says Mr. Rust, "we have had an increase of two local preachers, four places of worship, and 102 members of society." During this period the mission was transferred to the care of the General Missionary Committee.

In the spring of 1845 preaching was introduced to the village of Weston Colville, in Cambridgeshire; and Mr. Ford, a member of the Independents at a neighbouring place, allowed the services to be conducted in his house. A dwelling was then rented for the use of the congregation and the newly-formed society, and many sinners were therein converted to the Lord. This house becoming too small for the increasing congregation, a commodious chapel was soon afterwards erected, and opened for Divine worship in 1847. In March of that year Mr James Blades, then superintendent of the mission, wrote an encouraging account of the progress of the work of God. He says, "God is opening our way in this country in a remarkable manner. Such a spiritual awakening as we now have it has not been my happiness to witness since I entered the itinerancy; the country seems under deep religious impressions, —the fields are white already to harvest! The clergy have greatly exerted themselves to stop our progress, and to prevent our access to the people; but the great Head of the church is overruling their opposition for the furtherance of the gospel." In illustration of this statement it may be added, that two respectable farmers, being constables or churchwardens in neighbouring parishes, were sent by their respective clergymen to forbid the preachers conducting services in the open-air. They, however, deemed it best to hear a little for themselves before they carried their directions into practice, and while they listened to the truths delivered in simple language and fervour of spirit, both of them were convinced of sin, and instead of interrupting the preachers they began to seek salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, and became ardent friends to the rising cause, and liberal supporters of its institutions.

The number of members reported to the conference of 1847 was

216; and that reported to the following conference was 273. The succeeding year was one of much greater prosperity, the number of members reported to the conference of 1849 being 416. At the conference of 1850 we find Saffron Walden made into a separate circuit, with 516 members. The friends had suffered much in many places from bitter opposition of clergymen, who frequently got them turned out of their employment because of their connection with the societies, and the congregations had often been disturbed by the rude behaviour of ignorant and godless young men; but despite of all, the work of the Lord had prospered in a most encouraging manner, and produced a striking change for the better in numerous localities.

Returning to Upwell, or Downham, circuit, we find it devoting much missionary labour to the city of Ely and the surrounding country. The early missionaries suffered many painful interruptions while preaching in the open-air in this city, and had to endure many hardships and privations in their attempts to spread evangelical truth and piety through the neighbourhood; but they nevertheless met with an encouraging degree of success, the Lord crowning their labours with his blessing, and sinners being brought to Christ through their instrumentality. In 1850 Ely was the head of a branch containing 170 members; a neat chapel had been erected in the city, and several others in the surrounding villages. The home branch of the circuit reported 600 members; 770 in the two branches, being 300 more than reported in 1840, though Saffron Walden mission had been transferred to the care of the General Missionary Committee; a measure of prosperity demanding fervent gratitude to the Author of all good.

Wisbeach circuit conducted missionary operations in Huntingdonshire. In the foregoing chapter we noticed the commencement of a mission at Ramsey. This mission was sustained, and another commenced at Buckden in the year 1844. Mr. W. Pole was the missionary employed on the latter mission, and for a time was very successful. He began his labours by preaching in the open-air; large congregations listened to his discourses, and

several persons were convinced of sin. Some were soon brought into the liberty of the gospel, and in the course of three weeks a society of thirteen members was formed; and the work of conversion progressed in the face of considerable opposition, some of the new converts being deprived of their employment because they had united with the society. Cries for mercy became frequent; and those who had found the Lord were occasionally called from their beds in the night to pray with penitents in deep distress.

Other places were subsequently visited and good effected thereat. Great Paxton was opened in February, 1845; several sinners were soon turned from the error of their ways, and a society of fifteen members was raised up.

Gravely was visited in May, 1845, and considerable good was effected. Numbers began to flock to the preaching services, and became deeply affected under the word. On the 31st of July Mr. Pole preached there to a large assembly, when the whole seemed to be affected by the power of God; several penitents cried aloud for mercy, and found redemption through the blood of Jesus. A camp-meeting was held there on the 3rd of August, which was attended by much Divine influence; and at the love-feast held in the evening, seven or eight persons obtained deliverance from the burden of their sins, and others found liberty on their way to their respective houses.

Yelling was opened on the 29th of May, and good was soon effected. Impressions were made upon the minds of several, which led them to seek salvation through Jesus Christ, and consecrate themselves to His service.

Ettsley was visited on the 4th of August, and good was done there also. In the course of this month fifty souls were supposed to have found mercy at the different places on the mission, and the station bade fair to become prosperous. But through some cause or other it subsequently made little advancement for several years. In 1848 we find two preachers appointed to it, but the number of members reported was only 141. During the ensuing

year it was placed under the care of the General Missionary Committee, and reported 202 members to the conference of 1850.

It is to be regretted that Mr. W. Pole embraced unsound doctrines relating to the natural depravity of man, which materially injured this mission, and led to his separation from the connexion.

But notwithstanding the transfer of this mission, and apparently that of Ramsey, to another station, Wisbeach more than retained its number of members. In 1840 it reported 596, in 1850 it contained 631, including 123 in Holbeach branch.

Rockland circuit made considerable advancement during this period. In 1840 it numbered only 415 members, in 1850 it reported 706, besides 132 for Diss branch, 838 in all, above double the number reported ten years before. Most of the other circuits made some progress, but it is not necessary to enter into further details.

We may close our notice of the district for the present by stating that the number of members reported in 1840 was 8,629, and the number in 1850 was 11,522, nearly 3,000 increase in the ten years, notwithstanding those transferred to the General Missionary Committee in connection with the missions placed under its care.

Manchester district made some progress during the ten years now under review, but a very brief notice of it will suffice. In Manchester circuit there was but little advancement; the circuit was divided into two, comprising in the two 1,000 members, but these were not many more than were reported in 1840. Some of the neighbouring circuits were favoured with greater prosperity. Bolton rose from 230 members to 330, Rochdale from 410 to 564, Staley Bridge from 273 to 586, Haslingden from 222 to 301, Warrington from 372 to 568.

The two Derbyshire circuits also advanced encouragingly. Bradwell reported 300 members in 1840, and 396 in 1850; and New Mills nearly doubled its number, reporting only 240 in 1840, and 456 in 1850. Preston made Chorley into a separate circuit, and there was an increase of 136 members in the two. The societies in the Isle of Man made greater progress than this. In

1840 they numbered 930 members; in 1850 Douglas circuit reported 734 members, Ramsey 354, and Peel branch 163, total 1,251, being an increase of 321 for the ten years. It would be difficult to determine the net increase of members for the whole district, on account of the transfer of several stations to other districts; but it is pretty evident that in this densely populated part of the kingdom, the ten years' progress was but comparatively slow, a matter for humiliation and regret, to whatever causes it may be attributed.

Brinkworth district will, as heretofore, claim a somewhat lengthy notice. We begin with Brinkworth circuit, which we find in a prosperous state, and zealously engaged in missionary labours. In 1840 it numbered 800 members, and employed seven travelling preachers. The ensuing year was one of considerable progress; the number of members reported to the Conference of 1841, was 1,000, being an increase of 200 for the year, but thirty-two had been received with Worcester Mission. The circuit was then extensive, and was divided into branches and missions—as, the Home branch, Tetbury and Cirencester branch, Cheltenham branch, Worcester mission, and Filkins mission, most of which shared more or less in the improvement reported. The following year was also one of some advancement, there being an increase of 100 members. In June, 1842, the quarterly meeting reported that during the preceding five years, those of the superintendency of Mr. Joseph Preston, the circuit had lowered the debts on most of its chapels, had made various improvements in others, had expended £216 in missionary labours, had employed seven additional travelling preachers, and had an increase of above 600 members. Well might the brethren glorify God for the success with which he had been pleased to crown their united efforts. And enlarged prosperity awaited them. In 1843 the circuit reported 1,264 members, being an increase for the year of 164. In 1844 the number had become 1,319. In 1845 there was a small decrease of members, the number reported being 1,288. In the minutes of conference for this year we find two new circuits made—High-

worth and Cirencester. The formation of the latter was an encouraging instance of the success attendant on persevering labours in spite of formidable difficulties and violent persecution. One of the early missionaries had two of his teeth knocked out while preaching in the open-air at Cirencester, and was otherwise ill-treated. Several others of his brethren met with similarly cruel treatment, and the place was more than once abandoned for a time. But the zealous brethren returned to it with undiminished zeal, and persevered in spite of brutal opposition. Mr. Joseph Best, who laboured zealously in the locality in 1839 and 1840, says, "Persecution has raged to an alarming extent at Cirencester during the last three months; the windows of our preaching-room have been broken, the lights put out, the forms turned over, and the life of one of my colleagues has been in imminent danger. Such has been the violent conduct of the persecutors, that the people have been afraid to come to our services. Yet these wicked men, when brought before the magistrates, have been encouraged in their proceedings, and their conduct even vindicated by ——."

The missionaries were, however, at length successful in establishing a cause, and forming an independent station. Nor were their former labours in vain; considerable numbers who were religiously impressed under their ministry in the open-air, united with other churches in the town, and became consistent christians, as intimated in a former chapter.

This new circuit had still, however, to contend against powerful opposition for a number of years. Even so late as 1848 we find the following account published in the denominational magazine: "As our progress in Cirencester had long been hindered for lack of a suitable place of worship properly situated, brother Wilshaw applied last year to Christopher Rowley, Esq., for permission to hold our services in a school-room, which was granted,—and a service was held therein on October 24th, when publicity was given for another to be holden there on the following evening. But just before the hour when the service should have begun, our

friends were informed that, through the interference of a certain individual, the use of the school-room could not be allowed. When brother Lee came to the circuit in July last, having no preaching-room, we sang through some of the streets, and preached in the open-air. This proceeding caused us much opposition from the police, the clergy, and the magistrates,—and brother Lee's license to preach was demanded. Our opponents are exerting themselves to stop our open-air preaching in the country, and to get us deprived of the use of our preaching-houses, as well as opposing us in the town. Already one local preacher has been turned out of his house for allowing us to preach and pray therein. But in the name of God we intend to persevere; and we are happy to state that we have obtained a commodious and well situated room for our services at Cirencester, which was opened for worship on the 20th of August last, when the congregations were good, and the collections liberal." It is gratifying to add, that in a few years afterwards a substantial chapel was erected in this town, and a comparative calm succeeded the long storm of persecution and opposition.

But while we record the formation of two new circuits from Brinkworth circuit we regret to find the large and populous town of Cheltenham missing from the stations. The relinquishment of this town and locality will account for the diminution of members mentioned in a preceding page; but it is not in harmony with the spirit of enterprise and perseverance by which the circuit had theretofore been distinguished. Cheltenham mission might be unpromising and expensive, but well-directed and persevering efforts would surely have been crowned, sooner or later, with success. It is some relief to our regret for the abandonment of this large town, that it has since become connected with the Gloucester mission, under the care of the General missionary committee.

In 1850 Brinkworth circuit reported 830 members, and eighty on Hawkesbury Upton mission, in Gloucestershire, 110 more than in 1840, though two new circuits had been formed from it.

Motcombe circuit also made encouraging progress between 1840 and 1850; in the former year it reported 490 members, and in the latter 495, besides 104 in Sherborne branch, and 168 in Sturminster mission. But we are unable to detail either its missionary operations or its general prosperity, and must therefore content ourselves with this brief statement.

Frome circuit sent Mr. E. Rawlings as a missionary to the ancient town of Glastonbury, Somersetshire, in the spring of 1843. He left Frome for this town on Saturday, April 15th, and in harmony with the economical usages of the connexion, he went the journey of twenty-one miles on foot. Next morning he preached in the open-air in the market-place to an attentive congregation; and a local preacher who had accompanied him from Frome, addressed a well-behaved congregation in the evening, in the suburbs of the town. The commencement was encouraging; several souls were early brought to the Saviour, and a promising society was soon formed. Several other places were also visited, and at some of them the prospect was good. In 1845 the mission was extended to Bridgwater. Mr. T. Powell conducted the first service in a cottage. Afterwards a large room was rented, in which a society and Sunday-school were formed, which prospered so that ere long a larger room became necessary, and was happily obtained. The Glastonbury and Bridgwater mission did not, however, become prosperous. Considerable good was effected at a few places, but the mission has hitherto been one of the least successful in the west of England.

Salisbury circuit made considerable progress. The society and the congregation in the town improved, and the chapel was enlarged for their accommodation. A village chapel was erected at Edmonsham, in Dorsetshire. One was enlarged at Humington, to meet the wants of the crowded congregation. At Cranbourne, in Dorsetshire, where several unsuccessful attempts to establish a cause had been made, another attempt proved effectual, a society was formed, and a place of worship taken on rent.

Mr. Isaac White visited the village of Hanging Landford in

1846, when he met with much opposition while preaching in the open air; some wicked men "brought a number of dogs and set them upon him." But amidst the opposition which the missionaries had to encounter good was effected, a barn was kindly lent for preaching in, a society was formed, and in due time a chapel was erected. The members in the circuit rose from 312 in 1840, to 540 in 1850.

Shefford circuit changed its name to that of Newbury, and continued to make some advancement. It reported 879 members in 1840, and in 1850 it contained 990, besides 135 in Petersfield mission, in Hampshire. We find no record of the commencement or progress of the mission; but we meet with materials worthy of further notice respecting the other stations in Hampshire.

Mitcheldever circuit persevered in zealous efforts to do good in the face of many discouragements. At Barton Stacey the friends had no place in which to preach but the open-air, though there was a society of twenty members. But they persevered in their efforts, and at length succeeded in obtaining a room for their religious services. They also succeeded in obtaining houses to preach in at a few other places, and in forming a few societies. Encouraged by this measure of success, an additional preacher was employed, and sent as a missionary to Alton and the neighbourhood. He had to contend against powerful opposition, but he nobly braved the storm of persecution which was raised against him, and succeeded in obtaining the loan of some houses to preach in, and in forming some small societies, which numbered, altogether, thirty members in March, 1841. The good work also prospered in other parts of the circuit, and an increase of 100 members was realized for the year.

Yet persecution did not speedily expire in this part of Hampshire. Mitcheldever acquired an unenviable notoriety for the opposition it presented to the progress of the missionaries. Many of the inhabitants indeed were favourable to them, and had derived benefit from their labours; but certain influential gentlemen had recourse to dishonourable means to prevent their success. It

is greatly to be regretted that such a man as Sir Thomas Baring, Bart., who was upon the whole an amiable and liberal-minded gentleman, and allowed the missionaries to preach in several cottages on his estates, should so far have yielded to the entreaties of others as to do the missionaries serious injustice, and greatly impede their progress. From three letters written to him by the Rev. W. Thorn of Winchester, and published in the denominational magazine for 1845, we learn the following facts, which shall be given in Mr. Thorn's words. "The Primitive Methodists had agreed to purchase of Mr. Winkworth a cottage and garden at Northbrook, in the parish of Mitcheldever, for £100, on which to erect a chapel for the worship of God. The time was fixed, and had all but arrived for signing the agreement and settling the bargain; in fact they had virtually and morally bought the premises.

"The evening previous to the legal accomplishment of this object the Rev. Mr. Clark having by some means heard of the transaction, applied either to you personally or to your steward, and persuaded you, or him in your name, to offer the seller £20 more for the property than its real value, or than the Primitive Methodists were to have paid for it. This was immediately done, and the cottage and garden were wrested from their hands, and added to the ample estate of Sir Thomas Baring.

"The manifest motive of Mr. Clark was to prevent the Primitive Methodists from having a suitable place in which to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and, if possible, ultimately to drive them out of the parish and neighbourhood altogether. This, I hear, he has openly avowed, and exults in his superior generalship in the transaction.

"The injury done to these good people is agravated by the circumstance that they are now obliged to worship in a small inconvenient cottage, the pious occupants of which have a large family, and in which they are not sure how long they shall be enabled to carry on the service of God; and as Mr. Winkworth's house and garden were the only premises obtainable for their

purposes in the parish, your securing these has well nigh blasted all their hopes of future usefulness in that neighbourhood.

"You well know, and you have candidly stated, that the Primitive Methodists have been greatly blessed of God among the formerly profane and ignorant peasantry of Mitcheldever and the neighbouring places. Hence, for these useful and self-denying Methodists to find in *you* an opponent is strange indeed!"

Such are the facts contained in Mr. Thorn's able and characteristic letters. They serve to illustrate one very disheartening means of opposition with which the zealous missionaries had to contend, and by which their pious designs were not unfrequently frustrated, and their cherished hopes blasted. They, however, persevered in spite of all opposition, and the Lord continued to crown their labours with his blessing. In 1850 Mitcheldever circuit contained 437 members.

Andover circuit, in the same county, also made considerable advancement. Favoured with prosperity in many of the societies the authorities of the circuit sent Mr. W. Brewer as a missionary into the New Forest in the spring of 1843. In the succeeding spring he gave the following account of his labours and success. "I opened this mission on the 23rd of April, 1843; and am thankful to say that 'the day-spring from on high hath visited us,' and in some places where sin formerly abounded, grace now much more abounds.

"The first place I entered was Nomansland, which I found destitute of any place of worship, and so devoid of religious instruction that the inhabitants could truthfully have said, No man hath cared for our souls. The place was consequently notorious for wickedness, but a delightful change has been wrought. Some who came to revile me while preaching were convinced of sin under the word, and have become new creatures in Christ Jesus. We have raised a society of ten members, commenced a Sabbath-school, which now contains forty-three children, and obtained land on which to erect a chapel.

"Canterton was the second place which I entered; and here a

preaching house has been secured, and a class formed of five members.

"On entering Sway I visited every family, obtained a house in which to preach, and then announced when and where the service would be held. But the congregation being too large to be contained in the house, I preached in the open-air with good effect; and since then a preaching room has been rented, and furnished at several pounds expense, which has been borne by the friends. Here we have twenty-six members in society, and a Sabbath-school containing thirty-five children.

"At Wootton the Lord has converted a number of sinners; we have obtained a preaching room, and have formed a society of nine members. We have also obtained a piece of land on which to build a chapel, and have the promise of a pulpit and forms gratis. We have likewise preaching places at Lymington, East-end, Beaulieu-rails, Pennington, Brokenhurst, and Bashley, at which we hope to raise flourishing churches." Some of the most daring poachers were converted to the Lord in this district. One of them told the missionary that previous to his change of heart he had sometimes killed no fewer than fifty deer in a season. These sincere converts liberally supported the cause which they espoused. Before Mr. Brewer left the vicinity the societies met all his expenses, and had nobly assisted in the erection of two chapels.

This mission was afterwards attached to the Southampton station, which was a branch of Andover circuit in 1850, containing 271 members. The home branch then numbered no fewer than 602 members; a considerable number for a thinly inhabited agricultural district, and an evidence of the very encouraging success with which the Author of all good had condescended to crown the labours of the humble preachers.

Wallingford circuit pursued its missionary enterprise in the face of the most inhuman and brutal persecution. The following scene, which occurred at Bicester, in Oxfordshire, reflects the highest disgrace upon the magistrates and other influential inhabitants, as well as upon the ignorant and infuriated rabble that



were allowed unmolested to treat the pious and inoffensive missionaries in so brutal a manner. On Monday, July 31st, 1843, Messrs. S. West and C. Elford went to the town, partly with a design to obtain an interview with the magistrates and to request their protection while peacefully proclaiming the gospel of Christ, and partly with the design of preaching there. For several months previously the missionaries who had visited the town had been treated in a very brutal manner, and it was reasonably hoped that the magistrates on being informed thereof, would afford them legal protection. Only one magistrate could be seen on that day, and he gave the missionaries not a very encouraging reception.

In the afternoon they visited many families in the back streets, and held several short preaching services in the open-air without interruption, and announced their intention to preach in the market-place at six o'clock in the evening. At the appointed hour they repaired to the place, and commenced the service. They were allowed to sing and pray in peace, but Mr. West had not preached above ten minutes before the mob began to pelt them with rotten eggs, of which a plentiful supply had been provided. Mr. Elford responded to the beck of a lady by escaping into her house. He was, however, pursued by some ruffians, who knocked the bolt off the door of the house, and cursing him awfully, seized him, with a view to abuse him, and were only prevented by the interference of the lady, his humane and generous protector. Mr. West was now left to brave the fury of the storm alone, which beat upon him with redoubled fury. He stood a few seconds under the window of a respectable house, where he might reasonably hope to find some shelter; but in this he was disappointed, the inmates poured a quantity of dirty water upon his head. He then forced his way through the mob to an inn on the opposite side of the street, hoping to obtain shelter therein, but he was doomed to disappointment. The ladies (!) and gentlemen (!) were highly diverted with his appearance, besmeared with dirt and rotten eggs, and one of them said it afforded as much *fun* as a *bull-bait*. But he was not allowed to remain in the house; he

was ordered out into the back-yard, to which the mob had access. The gates were soon surrounded by a multitude who cursed and yelled like madmen, eager to apprehend him, that they might beat him cruelly, if not to take away his life. He had already received many severe blows when a savage-looking man seized him by the collar of his coat, and with a heavy push forced him towards his persecutors. As he was driven down the street he was again beaten with the fists of the infuriated rabble, and pelted with eggs, gravel, mud, and every thing available for the purpose. At the bottom of the street, perceiving that an outer entrance of one of the magistrates' houses was open, he ran into it, but was at once followed, seized, and dragged back into the street, where a quantity of water was poured upon him as he passed a pump-house. He was then pelted and beaten with augmented fury; and one man jumped upon his back, and rubbed mud and gravel about his head and into his right ear. The rage of the persecutors rose to such a height that Mr. West's life was evidently endangered. But a humane gentleman at length interposed. Approaching Mr. West, he kindly said, "Sir, I'll protect you; come along with me," and the persecutors, as if terror-stricken, ceased to beat him, and allowed him to depart in peace.

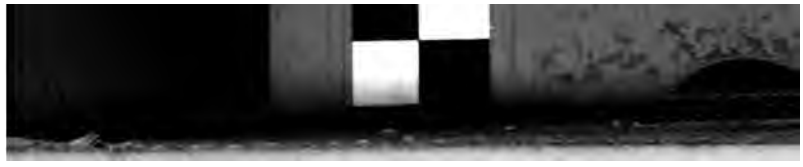
These cruel and inhuman persecutors were not arraigned before any earthly tribunal for their lawless conduct and their barbarous treatment of the missionaries, but several of the ring-leaders were in a few months afterwards summoned into the presence of their Maker, and one of them, the savage-looking man who dragged Mr. West out of the public-house yard, was cut off very suddenly, being found dead in bed.

Yet the spirit of persecution still lived. On the 16th of July following Mr. Isaac Hedges was preaching in the open-air at Ambrosdon, a small village about two miles and a half from Bicester, when he was apprehended by a constable, conveyed to Bicester, and confined there till the next day, when he was brought before the magistrates under a charge of blocking up a public foot-path. The fact was that he had stood to preach in front of a wheel-

wright's shop to a congregation of only five persons, and the spot on which he stood was above seventeen feet from the middle of the road. Mr. Hedges was dismissed by the magistrates, but with orders to appear before them again on the 19th. On the appointed day he was in attendance, when he was served with a summons by a policeman, accusing him of having blocked up a highway in Bicester on the 15th of the month. He was again dismissed, but ordered to appear before the magistrates on the 26th. On the appointed day he appeared, and the constable had the daring impiety to swear that sixty persons were hearing the missionary at Ambrosdon, and the policeman took oath that there were 150 persons hearing him in a public thoroughfare at Bicester. Mr. Hedges defended himself against the accusations, alleging that he had blocked up no thoroughfare and violated no law; but the magistrates fined him fifteen shillings "for the Ambrosdon case," and as he refused to pay it they sentenced him to twenty-one days' imprisonment and hard labour. This shameful violation of law and justice was perpetrated by the Rev. A. H. Matthews and Mr. W. Davis, surgeon—one a professed minister of the gospel of truth and righteousness, and the other a gentleman of a profession whose practice should have exerted a kindly influence upon his heart.

We pass no sentence upon these worthies, but leave them to the judgment of our readers. It is painful to add that the efforts of the missionaries in Bicester and in the immediate neighbourhood were not successful in the formation of societies, and that after some time they discontinued their labours there. Whether another attempt should not now be made to gain an establishment in the locality may be worthy of consideration.

But though the missionary efforts of the preachers of Wallingford circuit were not successful at Bicester, they were favoured with a degree of prosperity in the city of Oxford and in the neighbouring villages. At the conference of 1845 we find Oxford made into a separate circuit, with two travelling preachers, but the number of members is not reported. The new circuit, had, how-



ever, to contend against numerous difficulties, and has never yet risen to any considerable degree of influence and strength. Both Methodism and other forms of dissent have hitherto been comparatively feeble in this celebrated city and the neighbouring villages.

Of Chippenham circuit, in Wiltshire, we are able to give a more favourable report. It made considerable advancement between the conference of 1840 and that of 1850. The number of members reported in the former year was 312, in the latter 500. A number of new chapels were also erected, and placed in easy circumstances. One was built at Chittoe, nearly free from debt, and opened for divine worship in October, 1840. Another was erected at Stockley, and opened in September, 1841. In the same month another was opened at Seend Cleeve, whose erection was occasioned by the fiery zeal and activity of the clergyman of the parish. The Primitive Methodists had preaching in a cottage inhabited by a widow, who paid part of the rent, and the society the other part. The clergyman, on coming to the parish, was annoyed to find religious services held in this cottage, and resolved if possible to put a stop thereto. For this purpose he applied to the widow, and told her that "she was encouraging wickedness by taking such people into her house." The widow replied, "Sir, I did not take *them* in; it was they that took *me* in." When he ascertained that the society paid part of the rent, he inquired, "if she would turn them out if *he* would pay part of the rent." A freeholder in the neighbourhood, hearing of the circumstance, offered to give a site of land for a chapel; the offer was accepted, and a convenient sanctuary speedily erected. The officious interference of the clergyman was thus over-ruled for the good of the society whose extinction he was solicitous to effect.

Passing over other erections and improvements in Chippenham circuit we proceed to insert a brief record of the progress of the neighbouring circuit of Bath. In this fashionable city the society had long to struggle with formidable difficulties, and to labour under many discouragements. The friends, however, persevered

in their efforts, and gradually made some advancement. In 1845 a large house, well situated, was purchased, and a portion of it converted into a preaching-room, capable of holding 150 persons, and opened for religious worship in the month of July. During the superintendency of Mr. T. Hobson this room became so densely crowded that many persons who were anxious to attend were unable to obtain admission. The whole of the house was therefore converted into a chapel and school-rooms, and additional room was obtained by taking down the back wall and carrying the edifice out to the extent of the premises. By these means, and the erection of a gallery, comfortable accommodation was provided for 500 persons. The place was re-opened for religious worship in January, 1849, and encouraged the society to labour for increasing usefulness.

In February, 1844, Bath circuit extended its labours to Bradford, in Wiltshire. Preaching was at first conducted in a large upper room, formerly occupied as a weaver's shop. For a time the congregation was but small, consisting only of about thirty persons. But success attended the preached word, and a society was soon established. The attendance gradually increased till the room became well filled on most occasions, and was sometimes crowded to excess. In the spring of 1845 a building site was purchased, with a view to provide enlarged accommodation for the crowded congregation, by erecting a new chapel. The intended sanctuary was speedily commenced, and was opened for Divine worship in November of the same year, when large congregations attended, and liberal collections were made.

Thus a prosperous church was formed, and a convenient chapel erected for its service, within the short space of a year and nine months; making a valuable addition to the circuit. The Bath circuit, however, was still small and feeble when compared with most others. Yet its progress under difficulties merits a grateful record. In 1840 it employed but one travelling preacher, and reported only 115 members; in 1850 it employed two preachers,



and contained 225 members, having nearly doubled its numbers in ten years.

In the neighbouring city of Bristol, which was made the head of a new district in 1848, some encouraging progress was also made. In 1840 Bristol circuit reported only 240 members; in 1850 it contained 410. The progress of the cause in this large city was greatly impeded for many years, for lack of a suitable place of worship; but during the superintendency of Mr. C. T. Harris a new chapel was erected in an excellent situation, and opened for religious service September, 1849. It would accommodate nearly 500 persons without a gallery, and had good school-rooms below, all the length of the chapel; thus furnishing enlarged means of usefulness to the growing society. Other chapels were erected in the circuit, which contributed to the stability and progress of the societies, but which we cannot particularly specify.

The progress of Reading circuit and its missionary efforts will require a more lengthy notice than can be inserted of most stations. In the circuit report for 1841 it is said, "It is with gratitude to the great Head of the church that we are enabled to state that the home branch has been progressing during the year, and is still doing well. We have not had such severe persecution to contend against as in former years; though some of our members have been threatened with being turned out of their employments and ejected from their dwellings, if they continued to attend our ministry, and in some instances these threatenings have exerted an injurious influence. But considering the pressure of the times, and the severity of the late winter, our members have nobly stood their ground, and the increase for the year is fifty."

High Wycombe branch had encountered considerable persecution, and passed through some severe trials; but had nevertheless been favoured with a measure of prosperity, some striking conversions having taken place, the congregations generally having improved, and there having been an increase of about thirty members.



In Windsor branch persecution had raged more fiercely, and some of the members had been deprived of employment for their steadfast adherence to the cause which they had espoused. Here the societies had scarcely retained their number of members for the year.

During this connexional year Reading circuit extended its missionary labours into the county of Herts. It may, however, be necessary to state that the Primitive Methodist missionaries first penetrated into this country in the year 1838. In the month of August of that year Hull circuit, assisted in pecuniary matters by Driffield circuit, sent Mr. Samuel Chapman to commence a mission at Hertford, the county town. He laboured hard and zealously, extending his efforts to a considerable distance; but found the moral soil of the country to make but little returns for the labour spent upon it. The Hertford mission was transferred to Reading circuit in September, 1840, two years after its commencement, but it then contained only about forty members. In this year Reading circuit commenced missionary operations in the southern part of the county, at Rickmansworth and in the vicinity. But neither was this new station prosperous, and gave but little promise of success. In the circuit report it is said, "In this county antinomianism abounds, and Sabbath-breaking is most awful. It is the hardest and darkest county that has come under our missionary labours." The circuit, however, was resolved to persevere in its zealous efforts in this county, hoping to succeed sooner or later, being stimulated in its enterprise by its indomitable superintendent, Mr. John Ride.

The number of members reported for the whole circuit this year was 1,029, being an increase of 119, exclusive of those received with the Hertford mission.

The following year was one of still greater prosperity. The missionary efforts were considerably extended. We find two preachers employed on the Hertford mission, three on Watford mission, embracing Rickmansworth mission and many other places; two on Kingston mission, and one on Henley mission. We are



unable to record the progress of the stations in detail, but the increase of members for the whole circuit was 156.

The progress of the following year was still greater. We find two preachers on the Hertford mission as before, two on St. Albans, embracing Watford mission in whole or in part, two on Brentford mission, embracing probably Kingston mission, one on Henley mission, and two on Essex mission, the circuit having pushed its labours forward into this south-eastern country.

St. Albans was first visited from Aylesbury circuit. Whilst Mr. Henry Higginson was employed by that circuit in missionary labours at Luton, Dunstable, and other places in Bedfordshire, in the spring of 1839, he preached in the market-place at St. Alban's to a rude and disorderly congregation. One gentleman, however, sympathized with him, and told him that he was ashamed of their conduct, and encouraged him in his efforts to do good in the place. In 1843 we find this ancient town a mission station under the care of Reading circuit.

The number of members in this circuit and its missions, reported to the conference of 1843, was 1,452, being an increase of 267 for the year.

During the ensuing year these missions were placed under the care of the General Missionary Committee: Reading circuit retaining only High Wycombe and Windsor branches, besides the home part. In 1848 these branches were made into separate circuits; the former with 252 members, and the latter with 270, Maidenhead being placed at the head of the station. In 1850 High Wycombe circuit reported 319 members, and Maidenhead circuit 258; the former having an encouraging increase, and the latter a small diminution in the number of its members. Reading circuit having now neither branches nor separate missions connected with it was reduced to the number of 630 members. A brief notice of its further progress may be found in the following chapter.

A short account of the progress of Aylesbury and Banbury circuits must close our review of Brinkworth district for the



present chapter. In 1840 Aylesbury circuit reported 500 members. The ensuing year was one of prosperity. In the report for 1841 it is said, "During the year the circuit has been visited with refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord, and many sinners have been turned from darkness to light. Luton branch has 157 members, and Buckingham branch 140, being an increase of sixty during the year." The increase in the whole circuit was 115. The following year was also a prosperous one, the number of members reported was 715, being an increase of 100 for the year. On leaving the circuit in July, 1842, Mr. Samuel Turner, who had been the superintendent of the station for four years, had the gratification of reporting considerable progress. "The increase for the four years," he says, "is 435. We have likewise ten chapels, not one of which was occupied by our people when I entered the station; and have opened a promising mission at Newport Pagnell. I have had several excellent colleagues with me, whose praise is in all the churches; and the local preachers have laboured nobly. Our poor people, too, have liberally supported us. Their self-denial, their christian charity, and the deep interest they have taken in the work of God, are worthy of honourable mention."

In 1843 we find Luton branch made into a separate circuit, and a preacher stationed on Newport Pagnell mission, but the increase of members in the whole circuit was only small. During the next six years the circuit made gradual, but not rapid progress. In 1850 it reported 407 members in the home branch, 99 for Buckingham branch, and 135 for Newport Pagnell mission—641 in all. Luton circuit also made gradual, though not rapid advancement. In 1844 it reported 183 members, in 1850, 255, being an increase of 72 for six years.

Banbury circuit appears to have more than doubled its number of members between the conference of 1840 and that of 1850; having reported only 262 in the former year, and 689 in the latter, including 215 in Southam branch. The town of Banbury shared somewhat largely in the prosperity which these figures



indicate. A small chapel had been erected there about the year 1839, but being behind two cottages, and the only road to it being through a dark passage, it was but poorly attended, and the society continued feeble. In 1847 the cottages were taken down, and the chapel enlarged, being brought within three feet of the street. In the following year considerable improvement took place in the number of attendants, and the work of God prospered among them. In February, 1849, Mr. Samuel Turner, then superintendent of the circuit, reported that within the two preceding quarters the society and congregation had nearly doubled.

Southam branch was also favoured with rich effusions of the Holy Spirit, under the superintendency of Mr. James Mules. In the beginning of the year 1848 Mr. M. writes,—"For the last few weeks the Spirit of God has been poured out in an eminent degree, and old and young of both sexes have believed in Jesus, and been brought into the liberty of the children of God. At Napton upwards of thirty have been converted, among whom are some who were our worst enemies. Most of the new converts are going from house to house proclaiming what God has done for their souls,—and the saving influence is extending; husbands and wives, parents and children, are turning to the Lord. At Fenney Compton we have a blessed work. Six months ago we could not depend upon having a dozen hearers to preach to; but now people flock in crowds, and our place of worship is become too contracted. We have also had several conversions at other places, and our way is now open into several large villages where there are no dissenters. The harvest is great, but the labourers are few. May the Lord raise up many, and thrust them forth to gather in the ripening grain."

Some new places were likewise visited successfully, and societies formed thereat, in the vicinity of Banbury, one of which may be noticed. Lower Middleton was visited about the year 1841, when preaching was conducted in the open-air, in the midst of a large and much neglected population. Great good was effected, and a promising society was established. In 1848 a Sabbath-school was

commenced, which rendered the preaching place too small. A new chapel was therefore erected in the following year, and opened for divine worship in the month of December.

Before we narrate the missionary labours conducted under the direction of the General Missionary Committee, it may be proper to record some of the causes which led to the appointment of that committee. Among these causes may be placed the superannuation of Messrs. Bourne and Clowes, the appointment of Mr. John Flesher to the editorship of the connexional magazines, and the removal of the book establishment to London. Mr. Hugh Bourne had conducted the connexional periodicals from the beginning, eight of the first numbers excepted, to the conference of 1842, when his advancing age was thought to require relief from his arduous duties. Mr. Clowes had laboured comparatively little for several years, his former extraordinary exertions having so enfeebled his constitution as to make continuous labour impossible. The conference of 1842 deemed it proper to superannuate both, which was effected in a respectful manner, and suitable provision was made for their comfortable maintenance. Mr. John Flesher succeeded Mr. Bourne as editor of the magazines in January, 1843, and removed to Bemersley for the purpose. He soon found the inconvenience of having a book room and printing establishment in so obscure a situation. For many years this had been unavoidable, and the Messrs. Bourne had rendered good service to the connexion by the establishment of the book-room, when it was impracticable to establish it elsewhere. And while the connexion was mainly limited to the midland and northern counties, the inconveniences of the situation were not so sensibly felt. Mr. Flesher, however, rightly judged that the printing could be done at a much cheaper rate in the metropolis, and that the affairs of the book-room could be more advantageously conducted there than in the country. Suitable inquiries were made, and a full report was presented to the conference of 1843, when it was resolved that the book establishment should be removed to London as early as possible. Mr. Flesher was re-appointed editor; Mr.



John Hallam was appointed General Book Steward, and Mr. Thomas Holliday his assistant. Experience has amply testified the wisdom of this arrangement, and the principal connexional funds have largely reaped the pecuniary advantages resulting from it.

A General Missionary Committee was also appointed at the same conference, at which it was determined to remove the book establishment to London. One had been appointed in the year 1825, as noticed in a former portion of this volume; but its sphere of operations had been very limited, numerous circuits having continued to carry on missionary exertions under their own management. But the conference of 1843 considering this method as no onger practicable on a large scale, appointed a General Missionary Committee to conduct operations in a more efficient manner, appointed a salaried secretary, that he might be able to devote most of his time and energies to the supervision and extension of missions. We cannot better describe the duties of the committee and of the secretary than in the words of the minutes of the conference relating thereto, which we here insert. "The General Missionary Committee shall, from conference to conference, direct the movements of those missionaries who shall be placed under its care; shall examine their journals, reports, and accounts; pay their salaries, administer instruction and reproof, and furnish reports of them to the district meetings and conferences; shall open new missions, offer suggestions to circuits and missions about holding missionary meetings, and obtaining donations and subscriptions to aid the missionary cause; shall furnish the requisite boxes, books, cards, and printed reports; and shall seek to have its suggestions and the laws affecting the missionary work faithfully and spiritedly carried out in all their bearings.

"The General Treasurer shall invest the unemployed money of the society in a respectable bank, and draw it therefrom, and remit it as the committee shall direct.

"The General Secretary shall receive and answer letters about the missions, enter the missionary accounts and the committee's

minutes in a book which shall be provided for the purpose; shall prepare printed reports, books, and cards for circulation in the different stations; shall assist the general treasurer, and shall be employed as a deputation to aid in holding missionary services, as the committee shall direct."

Numerous regulations on missionary matters were made at the same conference, which it is not necessary to specify, except one, which gave permission to circuits having mission stations under their care either to retain those stations under their own management or to transfer them to the General Missionary Committee, should that committee deem it prudent to take charge of them. The following home mission stations were at once placed under the care of the committee:—London, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Southampton, Brighton, Bedford, Sheerness, Ramsgate, Maidstone, Canterbury, and Lisburn. The late Mr. John Garner was the first General Missionary Secretary; the late Mr. T. Holliday the treasurer; Messrs. Flesher and Hallam influential members of the executive, and Mr. W. Harland, superintendent of the London mission, was appointed general superintendent of the home missions, an office whose duties were not defined, and which continued only for one year. As these brethren were the executive of the committee, it was deemed best for the business to be transacted in London, and a small room was obtained for the purpose in connection with the book-room.

During the year a new mission was begun at Bradwell, in Essex, where considerable good was effected for a time, but which was afterwards abandoned through the occurrence of several adverse circumstances. At the following conference we find Northampton mission of Burland circuit, the mission stations in the Channel Islands, the Irish missions, those recently commenced by Reading circuit, and several others, placed under the care of the committee; making in all twenty-seven home mission stations, on which forty-one missionaries were employed. Some of these missions were among the least successful which the connexion had ever attempted to establish, and could not have been

sustained much longer by the respective circuits by which they were undertaken; others were more promising, and made better returns for the labour and expense expended upon them. The progress of some of them may be briefly noticed. Maidstone mission, in Kent, extended its borders considerably in the year 1844 and 1845. In 1844, the late Mr. Calver, a local preacher in Ipswich circuit, removed thence to Chatham, and finding no members of his own community there, and believing that missionary efforts might be productive of great good in that populous district, he went to Maidstone to invite Mr. Loxton, the missionary there, to visit Chatham and the vicinity, and establish preaching. Mr. Loxton complied with the invitation; preaching services were thenceforward regularly held, a society was formed, and the work gradually extended to neighbouring places. In five years afterwards Chatham was separated from Maidstone mission, and made the head of a separate station with 135 members. About the same time, or some months before, Mr. Loxton was invited to commence missionary operations at Chatham, eight miles to the north of Maidstone, he was requested by Mr. S. Doust to visit Goudhurst, thirteen miles to the south. He visited the latter place on the 30th of January, 1844, and preached in the evening, and a young man professed to obtain the liberty of the gospel under the sermon. The good work begun at Goudhurst, spread thence to Horsemonden, three miles distant. Mr. S. Doust and two of his brothers rented a house there for religious services at four shillings per week, at their own expense, and assisted in holding meetings therein. On the 11th of February Mr. Loxton preached twice at Horsemonden, and says in his journal for that day. "Here our prospects are very cheering. The population of the parish is 1218; there is no dissenting interest in it, and the parish church is a mile from the village. When I missioned Goudhurst the brethren there wished to know how it must be supplied with religious services. I advised them to be contented with one sermon a week, and to spend their spare time and energies in some neighbouring village,—they adopted my suggestion,

and fixed their outer post at Horsemonden. For some time above a hundred persons have assembled to hear the word of life, and we have now twelve members on trial, and a Sunday-school of between twenty and thirty children." Some time afterwards a chapel was erected there, which has been the birth-place of many souls.

Mr. W. Cooper succeeded Mr. Loxton on the Maidstone mission, and zealously prosecuted his missionary enterprise. At his urgent requests the General Missionary Committee sent two additional missionaries to assist him, and many fresh places were then visited, among which were Marden Beach, Towl Hill, Wouldham, Chesnut Street, and the important town of Gravesend. Several attempts had previously been made by the friends in London to establish an interest in this town, but the distance prevented them from prosecuting the enterprise with vigour, and their efforts therefore proved unsuccessful. Nor were the zealous and laborious efforts of Mr. Cooper and his colleagues attended, for some time, with the promise of much better results. On several occasions, after walking thither, sixteen miles from Maidstone, they could not obtain a congregation of more than four or five persons. Many advised them to give up the place, saying, they would never succeed; but they nobly persevered in spite of numerous difficulties and discouragements, and, after some time, a cheering degree of success rewarded their toil, and that of their successors. The first place of worship they occupied was the Temperance Hall; but on account of some changes in the trusteeship, they were soon obliged to leave it, and take refuge in an inconvenient room in Stone Street, the way into which was down several steps. This place too they had some time afterwards to quit; and when Mr. Jesse Ashworth first visited the town he found the friends without any place to worship in, except the the open-air. A very humble building at one end of the town, which had been used for a salting-house, was next obtained, and fitted up for religious worship. In this lowly place the society and the Sabbath-school prospered encouragingly, and many sinners

were converted to God. But at the expiration of a year it was relinquished for a commodious place in the central part of the town. Just after the opening of this place Mr. Ashworth wrote, "When we contrast our present with our past circumstances, we cannot but exclaim, 'What has God wrought!' During the last fifteen months we have raised in Gravesend alone above sixty pounds for different purposes, in addition to the quarterly collections and weekly subscriptions towards the support of the missionaries. About five years ago we had neither a member nor a Sabbath-scholar in this town; now we have sixty-five members and a hundred Sabbath scholars."

Canterbury mission also made some progress. In the city the society long continued feeble, and the congregation small; but at Petham, five miles distant, great good was effected in the midst of great opposition and persecution. Mr. Charles Parker was the first missionary who preached here; and a society was soon formed of those who had been brought to the Lord under his ministry and that of his fellow-labourers. Several of the members were, however, deprived of their employments, and turned out of their houses for uniting with the despised community. But they were faithful to their religious convictions, and continued to assemble together for worship; and when they could obtain no house in which to perform their devotions, they repaired early on the Sabbath-mornings to an old stone quarry, where they united in exercises of prayer and praise. At length Divine Providence interposed in their behalf, a new chapel was erected in an eligible situation, a large congregation attended it, and a flourishing society encouraged the despised and persecuted missionaries. This proved an occasion of considerable expense to the clergyman of the parish, a bitter opponent, as, in order to prevent the rapid spread of dissent or heresy, he deemed it necessary to employ a curate, and to hold additional services in his church. It is proper to add that the men who had been deprived of their employments and obliged to quit their dwellings for their religious fidelity were

afterwards favoured with secular prosperity, and rose considerably in the scale of society.

The further progress of the Kentish missions will be noticed in the following chapter.

Croydon mission, Surrey, claims a brief record. Mr. D. Hodgson a local preacher in one of the midland counties, having removed to the rising town of Croydon, applied to London mission authorities for a supply of preachers. His application was successful; Mr. Ride and others visited the place, and formed a small society. Croyden, Sydenham, and other places became regularly visited, and in 1849 we find Croyden mission under the care of the General Missionary Committee. Mr. Hodgson zealously exerted himself in various ways for the good of the cause, and largely contributed towards the support of the mission: and the missionaries and other brethren prosecuted their zealous efforts with fidelity and perseverance; but though their labours were not altogether fruitless, we find only forty-eight members reported to the conference of 1850.

Hertfordshire missions next come under our consideration. In a former page we mentioned the visit of Mr. H. Higginson to St. Albans, and his preaching in the market-place to a rude and disorderly congregation. Considerable good was done under the labours of his successors; but "for some time the society had to struggle with great difficulties, principally for the want of a place sufficiently large to contain the congregations." During the superintendency of Mr. G. Grigg certain premises were taken on rent, a part of which was fitted up for a preaching-room, in which many sinners were converted to the Lord. But the enlarged prosperity realized towards the close of the year 1843 required increased accommodation, and the preaching-room was altered so as to seat seventy additional hearers. It was, however, still too small; and the flattering prospect of great success led to the erection of a commodious chapel, which was opened for divine worship in December, 1844. This was an imprudent step, and unhappily involved the trustees and the society in serious difficulties. A



succession of disasters ensued, which rendered this chapel case one of the most painful and distressing which the connexion ever experienced, and which greatly impeded the progress of the mission. At the conference of 1850 there were only seventy-six members on this station.

Hertford mission promised to be more successful. The zealous and enterprising labours of Mr. John Guy and his colleagues were crowned with the Divine blessing. In November, 1845, Mr. Guy, writing to the editor of the connexional magazine, says,—"Places in Hertfordshire, formerly proverbial for spiritual apathy, have been graciously visited by the Lord. Hitchin is a considerable market-town, sixteen miles from Hertford, on the north road. I understand that Mr. S. Chapman preached here a few times in 1839, but that the persecution which befel him and his colleague, caused them to relinquish the place. At the beginning of the last summer we resolved to make another attempt to carry the people the gospel by preaching in the open-air. Importunate prayer for the Divine blessing was made for several weeks, and one Saturday night I went to hoist the gospel flag at Hitchin Hill, a hamlet adjoining the town. Many of the residents, including a number of profane persons, heard me; some of whom, I have been informed, have not been heard to swear since. A few weeks afterwards we supplied the town with Sabbath preaching; and then persecution commenced. Several of the brethren were roughly treated, being beaten with a dead cat, and abused with divers missiles. And being forbidden to stand in a court amidst a dense population of perishing souls, we were obliged to confine our labours to Hitchin Hill. Here, too, we have encountered persecution. One Sunday afternoon when I arrived I found that there had just been a race of asses (!); and some of its drunken abettors opposed me throughout the service. Notwithstanding these things, five persons have been converted, and have joined the society; and we have obtained a house to preach in, and have the prospect of extensive usefulness.

"At Wymondley, two miles from Hitchin, we effected an open-

the east of Hertford, but I fear I
General Missionary Committee can a

A few months later Mr. Guy repo
at Hertford, the prospect of success
with which his preaching had been li
Bishop Stortford. Mr. R. Beesley a
the work of God at Baldock, where
place within a fortnight.

In 1847 we find the Hertford miss
Mr. John Woodcock being appointe
Guy and E. Powell to Baldock. I
Woodcock gave a distressing account
county town, and in the neighbouri
he says, "there are eight places of w
the people is awful. Often am I l
through the streets on the Lord's da
the Sabbath is desecrated, grocers,
and fishmongers, are as actively eng
first part of the Sabbath-day as on
thorities of the town actually counte
the villages," he adds, "have no mea
the inhabitants enter either church
members on his station had hereto



inhabitants, Norton End, commonly called *Hell End*, on account of the general immorality of its residents, became the scene of their labours. Brother G. Grigg preached the first sermon to them, and Brother William Jones supplied them with regular preaching services; but these, for some time, were not of much apparent use. In the autumn of 1844 the word began to take effect, and in a few weeks about sixty persons were converted to God. A chapel now became necessary to accommodate our increasing congregation, and incessant prayer was made for a suitable place of worship." Two cottages were subsequently purchased, which were converted into a chapel, and opened for religious worship in April, 1847.

In August of the same year Mr. Guy and his colleague extended their labours to Biggleswade, eight miles north of Baldock. On the first of the month Mr. Guy preached there three times in the open-air to attentive congregations, and with a cheering prospect of success. About two months afterwards he wrote, "Every Sabbath we have had large congregations, solemn attention has been paid to the Word of Life, and we are beginning to see some encouraging fruit of our labours. Several houses are open for prayer-meetings, but none are sufficiently large to admit the congregations. Between four and five hundred hearers attend the Sabbath afternoon's services, and six or seven hundred those of the evening. Many persons are convinced of sin, and several have been set at liberty. Last week brother Powell formed a class of four persons. On Sunday I led a lovefeast, when one person spoke of being convinced of sin the first Sabbath I preached there, and the speech of a youth who had been brought to God under brother Powell was very powerful. The service throughout was very refreshing, and at the close three persons were received as members on trial. A little after five o'clock I spoke out of doors to about 500 people, and conducted a prayer-meeting at a respectable house from eight till nearly ten, four persons being in deep distress. As I was leaving the town a man informed me that he saw many persons attend our preachings who had not

usually attended any place of worship. I replied that those were the persons whom we sought to bring to the Saviour's fold." A few months afterwards he gives further intelligence of the progress of the good work at this town. "In my last communication I stated that four persons had been converted and formed into a society at Biggleswade; I now rejoice to state that fifty more have been awakened to righteousness, and have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel. Such an awakening has not taken place there since the last generation, and perhaps at no former period. We continued our preaching services in the open-air till near Christmas, on week-day evenings as well as on the Sabbath; somtimes by moonlight and sometimes by lamp and lantern light. Deep solemnity pervaded the assembled crowd from time to time; and when we retired to cottages for prayer, we were followed by broken-hearted penitents. The sorrow of some of them deepened for a week or two before they found relief; while that of others was turned into joy in a few hours. Short sermons and exhortations have been owned of the Lord in this revival; but in prayer-meetings especially He hath shown Himself mighty to save. On Mondays and Fridays we have had prayer-meetings at ten o'clock, with good effect. There is a visible change for the better in the morals of the labouring classes generally; and those who move in higher circles begin to see it. We are now in great need of a preaching-room or chapel. The gentleman who invited us to Biggleswade has placed his van-shed and warehouse at our service; but he will soon want his warehouse for his own use. We are, therefore, praying to the Lord to open our way for a room or chapel."

From Biggleswade the good work spread to Caldicote, a small hamlet in the vicinity, where several souls were saved, and formed into a society.

Wrestlingworth was also visited successfully. "Ten persons," says Mr. Guy, "have joined our society here, most of whom can rejoice in the pardoning love of God; and the glory of the Lord is being revealed so as it has not been seen before. A friend



who has united with us has fitted up a small barn, for which we are to pay him a rental of two pounds per year."

In the spring of 1849 Mr. Guy says, "Our places are generally well attended; indeed, Baldock chapel is become too small for the congregation. At Stevenage, too, where we had many reverses, the Lord has sent us a reviving shower; several sinners have been converted, and the congregation is too large for the cottage in which we preach. East Hatley, a small parish in Cambridgeshire, thirteen miles from Baldock, was visited last summer, and a good work speedily commenced among nearly all the poor inhabitants. The clerk of the parish was renewed by Divine grace, and opened his house for preaching; our services have been held in it during the winter, and several remarkable instances of the saving power of God have been witnessed. But the clerk's master remains unconverted; and though we have seventeen members in society they are likely to be scattered, unless the Lord interpose in our behalf. The whole of the parish belongs to Downing College. I visited Croyden, an adjoining village, last summer, and a good impression was made; but not obtaining a house in which to conduct our services our labours there seem to be lost. Wendy, in the same neighbourhood, was opened with a good prospect, and the clergyman heard us with approbation; but we could not get a house to worship in during winter.

"Littlington, a large village near Royston, was opened last summer and a large and deeply attentive congregation regularly attended our services; after a time we obtained a preaching-house, and formed a society, and the work is now prospering there.

"We have been shut out of doors at Norton Arsley, and Clipton, and have thereby lost several members; and at Biggleswade our interest has been much damaged for lack of a suitable place of worship. On these accounts many persons who would otherwise have been in church-fellowship with us have entered the pale of other societies.

"At Caldecote and Holm, near Biggleswade, the work is progressing; and lately we have opened Langley, where we have the

prospect of success." The number of members on this mission in 1850 was 170.

The selection of a new mission station at Calder Bank, in Scotland, claims a brief notice, with which we must close our observations for the present respecting home missionary operations. Some members of the Primitive Methodist Connexion having removed to that neighbourhood, for the sake of employment at the iron works, were desirous for the preachers of their own community to visit the locality, and establish regular religious services. Accordingly, Mr. Christopher Hallam, then stationed at Glasgow, visited the neighbourhood, and met with a kind reception. In the denominational magazine for April, 1848, we find the following account of his labours. "Mr. Hallam has recently commenced preaching here, at Gartness, and other places; success has crowned his efforts, and several societies have been formed. The Calder Bank Ironworks Company contribute 10*s.* a week towards his support, besides the use of a house as a residence, and a chapel in which to preach and conduct other religious services." The liberality of the company rendered the maintenance of this mission but a trifling expense to the funds of the connexion, and a considerable amount of good was accomplished through the blessing of God on the labours of the missionaries successively stationed there.

We find nothing in the Irish missions of sufficient importance to merit a record in this chapter, and therefore proceed at once to chronicle the progress of the Canadian mission. In the months of January and February, 1841, a great revival of religion took place in the Toronto circuit. "Protracted meetings," or special services, were held at different places with extraordinary effect, about 200 souls being brought to God thereat.

At the conference of 1842 the number of members in Canada was reported at 663. There were then three stations,—Toronto, Brampton, and Markham, and two preachers employed on each. With a view to more efficient management, these circuits were made into a separate district, and empowered to hold a yearly

district meeting similar to the district meetings at home. A district committee was also appointed to "be governed by the same rules as the district committees in England."

The increase of members for the following year was 242; and additional regulations were made in order to extend the missionary operations in Canada. The district was "placed under the care of the General Missionary Committee" in England which was empowered to send additional missionaries thither, to aid in supporting those already there, and to arrange in receiving therefrom monthly accounts of the progress of the work. Directions were likewise given for a missionary society to be organized in Canada, in order to raise funds for enlarged missionary operations in that rising province; and to prevent embarrassment by undertaking more missions than could be sustained, it was arranged that no mission should be undertaken in that country without the sanction of the Canadian District Committee. These regulalations were beneficial in their operation. Liberal contributions were obtained in Canada, the missions were extended, and an encouraging accession was made to the number of members. The report for 1844 contained ten travelling preachers, eighty-three local preachers, 1004 members of society, 172 on trial, twelve chapels, four Sunday-schools, forty-three teachers, and 269 scholars. At the conference of this year Mr. Hugh Bourne, though upwards of seventy years of age, volunteered his services as visitor and inspector of the missions in Canada. His age and infirmities led many of the leading friends of conference to question the prudence of the proposal; but such was his urgency that the respectful opposition of his brethren at last gave way, and his offer was accepted. Arrangements were made for his outfit and comfortable support, and he was to stay as long as he chose, and the expenses of his return to be met by the Missionary Committe. He was to be "under the joint direction of the General Missionary Committee and the Canadian District Committee," which were required to arrange matters so as to "render his mission, that of an adviser, in carrying out the purposes of the com-

mittees respecting the missionary work." We accordingly find his name on the stations for Canada, as "Adviser from the English conference." On Wednesday, July 3rd, he sailed from Liverpool, and after a tedious passage, during which he suffered much from sea sickness, he arrived in safety in Canada. As early as practicable he visited the respective stations; no small task for a man of his years. His visit, however, was not the most happy either to himself or the leading brethren there; a difference of views on some subjects having in some measure interrupted the harmony which it was desirable to maintain. This may chiefly be accounted for from his advanced age, and the widely different circumstances of the Canadian missions from those of England. He returned through a part of the United States, and arrived in England in sufficient time to attend the conference at Tunstall in 1846. We find the number of members reported for the Canadian missions in 1845 to be 1143, some fewer than the total reported in 1844. In 1846 there was another small diminution. But the tide of prosperity returned in the following year, the number of members reported to the conference of 1847 being 1246. During the ensuing year several new chapels were erected, and placed in easy circumstances; some of the missions were extended, and an encouraging addition was made to the number of members. The report for 1848 contained eight principal stations, fourteen missionaries, twenty-three connexional chapels, fifteen Sabbath-schools, 764 scholars, 128 teachers, and 1343 members of society. The next succeeding year was one of greater progress, the number of members having risen to 1,526. In 1850 the number reported was 1,630, about 1,000 more than in 1840. Could the urgent calls for missionaries have been promptly met, a much greater increase would doubtless have been realized. During the period in question Messrs. T. Adams, J. Towler, W. Gledhill, and J. Davison, were sent from the ranks of the regular ministry in England, and rendered good service to the stations in Canada. Mr. Davison's age, experience, and wisdom, enabled him to afford valuable assistance in the committees of management. But could

the supply of missionaries have been quadrupled much larger accessions would have been made to the mission churches, and the cause in Canada would have been both greatly strengthened and widely extended. Its further progress will be noticed in the ensuing chapter.

We must now glance at the missions in the United States of America. The societies in the Eastern States had for some years been independent of the connexion in England, though they continued to retain a friendly relation. But an official communication therefrom was sent to the British conference of 1843, urgently requesting a formal union with the connexion, which on certain conditions was complied with. At the following conference the General Missionary Committee was empowered to send a superintendent to the missions there, and to support him, should the missions not be able to do so. Considerable delay, however, was occasioned in carrying out this purpose, through the failure of the Committee's negotiations with several brethren deemed competent for the undertaking. But towards the close of the year 1845 the committee made satisfactory arrangements with Mr. W. Towler, then superintendent of Oldham circuit; and he and his family embarked for New York on the 17th of December, and arrived there on the 25th of January, 1846. He applied himself with great zeal and assiduity to the duties of his mission, and the feeble and scattered societies were soon inspired with new life, and encouraged to hope for brighter and better days. But Mr. Towler was not a man of strong constitution, or of robust health. He was tall, and had a commanding aspect, but was ill qualified to sustain much toilsome labour, or to endure the great and sudden changes of temperature of the American climate, which soon affected his feeble frame. In the beginning of October, 1846, he paid a visit to Canada according to request, and preached and delivered addresses to large assemblies at Toronto. He preached a missionary sermon in the British Wesleyan chapel, kindly lent for the occasion, to above 2,000 persons, and was courteously assisted by Mr. Harvard, superintendent of the Wesleyan mis-

sions. On the following evening he spoke at a missionary meeting in the same chapel, giving a clear and rapid sketch of the connexion which he represented, and of its missionary operations. The few weeks he spent in Toronto were "times of refreshing" and of great encouragement to the friends; but little did the large audiences which were thrilled with his eloquent appeals imagine that his course was so near its termination. He arrived at New York, on his return from Canada, on the 6th of November, and on the following day found himself very ill. His case was not fully understood either by himself or the medical gentleman that attended him. Hence he continued to preach, and to devote himself to anxious and onerous duties, when he should have enjoyed perfect repose. General prostration rapidly ensued, and on the 2nd of December his medical attendant was surprised to find him in a hopeless state, and said, "he must have worn out his powers, and exhausted himself by mental exertion." On the 4th he died of congestion of the brain, at the early age of forty years. Mr. Towler was a man of superior mental powers, of general information, and of accomplished manners. His preaching was instructive, animated, and eloquent. Uncommon power frequently attended it, so that his audiences were sometimes as if electrified under his almost overwhelming appeals. But his fragile frame did not allow him to perform the amount of pastoral labour which was expected of him in common with his brethren, which produced unfavourable impressions concerning him among some who could not understand how the labours of a preacher could exhaust his strength. The closing scenes of his life were in harmony with his course. He was graciously sustained by his Divine Master in the prospect of dissolution, and he died in the peaceful possession of christian faith and hope. His unexpected death was a severe shock to the societies in whose welfare he took a lively interest; and no successor being appointed they soon reverted to their former state of independence of the connexion in England, though retaining as before a friendly relation.

In the Western States of the Union more successful efforts



were made to establish Primitive Methodism. In the year 1842 Mr. John Leekly emigrated to America, and settled near Galena, Illinois. He was one of the first converts of the Primitive Methodist missionaries at Middleton-in-Teesdale, in the north of England. In due time his gifts were employed in the capacity of a local preacher, and for a short time he was engaged in the regular ministry, from which he withdrew from a sense of his unfitness for the work. When he settled near Galena, where his brother, T. B. Leekley, and other members of the family then lived, he resolved to do his utmost to spread the truths of the Gospel in the neighbourhood around him, and to establish the discipline and usages of the Primitive Methodists. Accordingly, he and others, amounting in all to nine persons, formed themselves into a Primitive Methodist society. In February, 1843, the little company held their first quarterly meeting at Granthill, near Galena, when they engaged a travelling preacher, and made other suitable arrangements for carrying forward the work of God. The efforts of the friends in this new country were crowned with a measure of success. In 1847 they had in society 280 members, employed four travelling preachers, and had numerous calls to visit fresh places. They were naturally desirous of maintaining a formal union with the connexion in England; but the difficulty of properly maintaining the discipline of the connexion in the United States made the authorities at home unwilling to make another effort for the purpose. It was deemed best for the brethren in the Western States, like those in the Eastern ones, to be self-governed and self-sustained, while friendly correspondence should be maintained between the American societies and those in England. The societies in the Western States therefore formed themselves into an independent community, and in May, 1847, held a conference, which they designated "The Primitive Methodist Western Conference of the State of Illinois and Winconsin Territory." Several preachers were soon afterwards recommended by the authorities in England to the rising community in the far west of America, and they found among them encouraging spheres of labour and cheerful

supports. Mr. Leekley watched the progress of the infant community with paternal interest, and lived to see its borders greatly enlarged, and its members increase to about 1000. After suffering much and long with exemplary patience and resignation to the Divine will, he departed in peace in February, 1854, in the fifty-first year of his age. He was a man of respectable intelligence and of great christian excellencies. His memory is embalmed in the grateful remembrance of those who knew him, and the benefits resulting from his labours will be long felt in the country of his adoption, and where his ashes await the resurrection of the just. Another brief notice of the community of which he was the father may be found in the following chapter.

We must now turn from the western to the southern world, and narrate the commencement and progress of missionary operations there. The colony of South Australia first claims our attention. Mr. John Wiltshire, a local preacher in Darlaston circuit, and Mr. John Rowlands, an office-bearer in Oswestry circuit, arrived in this colony in June, 1840, and soon afterwards made arrangements for holding regular religious services and for forming a Primitive Methodist society in the land of their adoption. Having met with a member from Berkshire, and a man and his wife who had been members in Guernsey, they united in holding an open-air service in the streets of Adelaide, on Sunday, July 26th. In the evening preaching was conducted at the house of Mr. Wiltshire, when a society was formed, the first Primitive Methodist society in the southern hemisphere. Thenceforward open-air preaching was regularly conducted on Sunday afternoons, when the weather would permit, and at Mr. Wiltshire's house in the evening, till his removal to an inconvenient distance. Mr. John Bullock, from Yorkshire then gave a site of leasehold land for a small chapel, which was speedily erected, and opened for divine worship in October, 1840. At the quarterly meeting of March, 1841, the brethren reported seven local preachers, sixteen members of society, and twenty Sabbath-school scholars; and an urgent application was made to Darlaston and Oswestry circuits



for a regular missionary to be sent. This would have been too responsible an undertaking for two single circuits; but the subject was brought before the conference of 1842, which authorised the General Missionary Committee to send a missionary to South Australia as soon as sufficient funds should be raised for the purpose. Some delay took place in carrying this purpose into effect. The lack of greater success on the American continent operated prejudicially on some minds, damping their zeal for missionary operations abroad. A plan was suggested by the Bottesford circuit for enlisting the children in the connexional Sabbath-schools in the contemplated mission, which was cordially adopted by several circuits, and produced considerable assistance towards the expense of the undertaking. But when the requisite funds were raised, some time elapsed before the missionaries were chosen, the Missionary Committee having met with several disappointments in their efforts to obtain suitable brethren for the important undertaking. At length Mr. Joseph Long, of Darlington circuit, and Mr. John Wilson, of Ipswich circuit, were appointed to the promising field of labour in South Australia.

During the time which elapsed in raising the requisite funds and in obtaining missionaries for this colony, a desire was cherished in several parts of the connexion for a missionary to be sent to New Zealand. While Mr. W. Harland was assisting at some exciting missionary meetings in North Shields circuit, in November 1843, he suggested the practicability of missionaries being sent to New Zealand, and sustained there by the yearly contributions of the Sabbath-school teachers. This suggestion appears to have been first thrown out at a powerful missionary meeting held at Old Cramlington colliery, at which the following resolution was carried, and signed by Mr. John Lightfoot, superintendent of the circuit, and Thomas Hall, superintendent of Cramlington Sunday school:—

"We approve of the suggestion concerning each Sunday-school teacher raising the sum of one shilling during the ensuing year, to aid in missionary labours in New Zealand; and we resolve to

carry the suggestion into operation, and to recommend the connexion to do the same."

Other schools acting upon this suggestion, the Missionary Committee was encouraged to engage Mr. Robert Ward, superintendent of Mattishall circuit, as a missionary to New Zealand. A number of prudent regulations were made by the committee affecting foreign missionaries, and signed by the executive of the committee, and the three missionaries then going out, which, as an important official document, afterwards sanctioned by the conference, and the regulations of which are still in force, we here subjoin.

"1. All the committee's resolutions shall be understood to be subject to the allowance or disallowance of the conference, to be held in the year 1844; though the committee does not anticipate the conference's disallowance of any of them, unless it be to promote the interests of Christ and the missionaries; and the committee will exert itself to secure the conference's allowance, unless it shall appear that these important ends will thereby be endangered.

"2. The costs of the missionaries' passages, their victuals and outfittings for their voyages, the salaries of the single men while on their passages, as well as their salaries, board, and lodgings for nine months after their arrival, (and the salaries and allowances of married men for the same length of time after theirs,) shall be either paid into a bank, so as to be drawn by them when they arrive, or be placed in their possession when they set sail, as shall be found most safe and convenient; and the conference of 1844 shall be desired to fix what shall be allowed to married men, in addition to the victuals and outfittings for their passages.

"3. If the missionaries employed shall conduct themselves uprightly and efficiently they shall not be expected to remain on foreign stations longer than ten years, except by the mutual concurrence of themselves, and the officiating organs of the connexion; and when they shall remove under official sanction, they



and their families, if they have any, shall be placed in home stations.

"4. They shall, at the discretion of any conference of the Primitive Methodist connexion, or General Missionary Committee appointed thereby, be liable to be removed before the end of ten years hence to either home stations or to other foreign ones, than those which they shall be occupying at the time being.

"5. If the health of any missionary shall, within ten years hence, fail so much as to disqualify him from prosecuting his ministerial labours, and if there shall not at the time be any default in his missionary character, then his removal shall take place as speedily as it can be prudently effected.

"6. When the removal of a missionary shall take place, and that of his family, if he shall have one, (if his conduct shall have been upright and Primitive Methodistic, and if his removal be effected under proper official direction), the expenses occasioned thereby shall be borne by the connexion; but if his conduct or his removal shall be found otherwise than is herein expressed—then it shall be at the connexion's option whether these expenses shall be borne wholly or in part by himself or not.

"7. If a married missionary shall die on a foreign station, and if his widow shall, within three months after his death, write to the officiating organs of the connexion, to solicit the removal of herself and her children, if she shall have any,—then the connexion shall bear the expenses of the removal, provided it be effected, as to time and manner, under proper official direction.

"8. The missionaries shall receive salaries, rents, book-profits, travelling expenses, and other immunities, to such extent as will be equal to the average allowances made to their brethren in home stations; and in order hereto they shall furnish, in detail to the Missionary Committee, a list of rents, and of the prices of provisions and wearing apparel in their respective stations, that an equality may be fixed.

"9. In purchasing furniture for married missionaries, obtaining board and lodgings for single ones, and otherwise expending the

missionary money, there shall be observed the same economy as that which has been generally practised in the connexion, and as will befit the means by which such money is raised.

"10. The duties and interests of every foreign missionary, respecting the Primitive Methodist Itinerant Preachers' Friendly Society, (including those of his family, if he have one), shall be deemed the same as if he occupied a home station. Hence, if the duties be fulfilled, the interests will be secured; as the committee is confident that the next yearly meeting will sanction this resolution.

"11. As the work of our missionaries is spiritual, they shall not directly or indirectly embark in business or trade to secure personal profit, but shall devote their energies to the spreading of His interest, who says, 'My kingdom is not of this world.'

"12. As our missionaries are emphatically teachers of religion, they shall not be members of political associations, nor take any part in public political disputes, but shall enforce, by precept and example, a cheerful obedience to the lawful authorities and institutions recognized in the countries to which their respective stations shall belong. And, in order that they may observe this regulation, they are desired to acquaint themselves with the governors and the laws of those stations, and to demean themselves towards the former, and observe the latter, in such a manner as to secure every possible facility to the spreading of the work of God among the unsaved of mankind; which must be the *alpha* and *omega* of all their conduct.

"13. Before receiving any person as a member of society they shall be satisfied of his desire to become a decided christian, and if he be unbaptized, shall perform the rite of baptism by sprinkling in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: and they shall not allow members to repeat faults with impunity, but shall meekly, and yet firmly enforce the wholesome discipline observed by the connexion at home, except where difference of circumstances shall render any of its unessential details inexpedient; and the



exceptions must always be subject to the allowance or disallowance of the home authorities.

"14. Wherever it is practicable they shall establish Sunday, week-day, and infant schools; and shall at stated times catechise the pupils thereof on subjects calculated to render them intelligent, industrious, and reputable christians.

"15. If they shall have to endure persecution in the discharge of their duties, or witness the endurance of it by any of our members or friends, they are hereby exhorted to cherish and enforce meekness and prayerfulness, and to elude suffering by such means only as are in accordance with the gospel and the laws of the country in which the persecution shall take place.

"16. They shall keep journals of their labours, regular accounts of the receipts and disbursements of their missions, memorandums of suggestions likely to improve the spiritual and financial interests of those missions, and to improve our legislation respecting them; and these journals, &c., with plans of the missionaries' appointments, shall be transmitted to the General Missionary Committee in London once in three months at the least, and oftener if the committee shall desire them.

"17. If a missionary shall, within six years after his arrival at his first foreign station, wish to dissever himself from the Primitive Methodist connexion, he shall refund to the General Treasurer of the Missionary Fund the money expended in conveying him from England to the station.

"18. The General Missionary Committee, and the brethren whose names are inserted at the head of the preceding regulations, having agreed to observe every provision hereof, do hereunto set their hands and seals on this 26th day of April, 1844."

Members of the Committee,

JOHN GARNER — JOHN HALLAM
THOMAS HOLLIDAY — WILLIAM HARLAND
JOHN FLESHER

Missionaries,

ROBERT WARD — JOHN WILSON
JOSEPH LONG

As Mr. Ward departed before Messrs. Long and Wilson, we must first narrate the commencement of the New Zealand mission.

Mr. Ward and family sailed for New Zealand on Thursday, May 2nd, 1844, and landed at New Plymouth in that fine country, on the 29th of August following. On the first of September, he began his missionary labours by visiting from house to house among rich and poor, churchmen and dissenters, Jews and Catholics, all of whom treated him with respect, and most of them promised to attend an open-air service of which he had given notice. At two o'clock he stood up in the middle of the town and preached from—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He preached there again in the evening to an attentive audience, and met with a hearty welcome from several persons who had been members of the society in England. On the 8th he formed a society of four members. In a few days afterwards he extended his labours to several places in the country, visiting many of the settlers in their scattered habitations, and administering to them the bread of life. Writing to the Missionary Committee on the 21st of September, he says, "I think this mission presents a fair prospect; but much tact and prudence are necessary to ensure success. The colony is now in a very unsettled state, on account of the claims made by the natives on the land which the New Zealand Company has sold to the settlers. There is a deal of corn growing, but very little money in the settlement; hence little can be raised towards the support of the mission before the harvest." The population of New Plymouth was but small, and the district around but thinly inhabited. Under these circumstances the progress of the mission was not to be despised. At the conference of 1845 the number of members was reported at forty. In the missionary report for that year, it is said, "During the year Brother Ward has established a day-school for the native children; the only one in New Plymouth. He intends to penetrate some parts of the country beyond the limits of his station; and to enable him to execute his design, arrangements have been



made to supply him with a colleague as early as possible." In the year 1846 Mr. Henry Green and wife were sent to this colony to assist in strengthening and enlarging the mission; and in May, 1847, Mr. Green commenced missionary operations at Wellington. In June, a kind friend offered him the use of a school-room for religious services, which was gratefully accepted; a Sunday-school was immediately commenced, and the work of God made some progress. Under date of March 14th, 1848, he writes, "Between ten and eleven months ago, when I first landed at Wellington, we had no society here; but since then a society has been formed, and a chapel built. We have now forty-five members, and are expecting to see greater things."

Towards the close of the year 1847, about 800 emigrants arrived at Auckland, the capital of New Zealand, among whom were some who had been members of the Primitive Methodist connexion in England. These were anxious for a missionary of their own community to be sent to that rising town, and on December 29th, 1847, Mr. Ward communicated their requests to the Missionary Committee. Lack of funds prevented immediate compliance therewith; but at the conference of 1849 Mr. Joseph Long was appointed to remove from South Australia to New Plymouth, that Mr. R. Ward might occupy a missionary station at Auckland. Accordingly Mr. Long removed in January following, and on his arrival at New Plymouth, Mr. Ward repaired to the capital to commence his missionary labours there. The number of members reported to the conference of 1850 for the New Zealand stations was as follow: New Plymouth thirty, Wellington fifty-two, and Auckland seventeen. A serious occurrence had transpired at Wellington. In October, 1848, "three shocks of an earthquake took place which destroyed much property in the town and neighbourhood, including the Wesleyan, Independent, and Primitive Methodist chapels." The demolition of the chapel occasioned considerable inconvenience and expense; but in due time the injuries were repaired, his excellency the governor presented a

donation towards the expense, and the cause continued to make steady advancement.

Turning now to the Australian missions we begin with that at Adelaide, the capital of South Australia. Numerous hindrances had occasioned delay in the departure of the missionaries, Messrs. Long and Wilson; but on the 12th of June, 1844, about six weeks after the departure of Mr. Ward for New Zealand, all things were got ready, and they sailed from London for the place of their destination, and after a tedious passage of four months they arrived in safety. They met with a welcome reception from the friends who had long been expecting their arrival; and as early as possible they began their missionary labours. They soon extended their operations to different needy localities, and were made useful in the conversion of sinners, and in gathering into church-fellowship several who had long lacked the privilege of religious communion. Adelaide, Pine Forest, Payneham, Hindmarsh, Hope Valley, Islington, Walker Ville, Darley Glen, Asmond, Richmond, Balhannah, Angas, Echanga, and Mount Barker, shared in the benefit of their labours; and sixty members were reported to the conference of 1845. Previous to this period Mr. John Wilson had removed to Sydney, New South Wales, to establish a mission there, of which a brief account will be given in a succeeding page. On the 9th of December, 1845, Mr. W. Storr sailed from London to supply Mr. Wilson's place in South Australia.

The Adelaide mission made slow but steady progress. Seventy-one members were reported at the conference of 1846, eighty-three at that of 1847, and 105 at the conference of 1848. At this conference we find the mission divided into two stations, Adelaide and Mount Barker—Mr. Long occupying the former station and Mr. Storr the latter. In June, 1848, Mr. Long says, "In Adelaide and the surrounding villages we are steadily progressing, both in numbers and piety. The cause is taking a firmer hold on the public mind. The little chapel which we have erected has laid a more solid base on which to work; and the attention which

is devoted to our Sabbath scholars will, I have no doubt, amply repay us for our toil. Our members of society are becoming more alive to God, our congregations are very greatly increased, and our prospects were never so cheering as they are at present. We have six connexional chapels, six Sabbath schools, twenty-eight teachers, and 227 scholars."

Under the same date Mr. Storr writes as follows from Mount Barker, "The spiritual state of this mission is encouraging. The members of the church appear to be thirsting for a deeper work of grace and a general revival of religion. During the last quarter we have had difficulties with which to grapple, but we are not discouraged." At the conference of 1849 the number of members reported for the two stations was 138. In September, 1849, Mr. Long had the pleasure of assisting at the opening of a chapel at Kooringa, or Burra Burra Mines, 100 miles north of Adelaide. Mr. John Wiltshire had removed thither in the preceding autumn, and finding two or three persons who had been members of the connexion in England, he and they united in a society, began to preach in the open-air, and to hold prayer meetings in private houses. Their numbers increasing, a more commodious place became necessary for their meetings, and they resolved to undertake the erection of a chapel. They succeeded in the enterprise; a stone building, 30 feet long and 20 wide, was erected, and placed in easy circumstances. In October 1849, the friends there reported five local preachers, about twenty members in society, and increasing congregations. In January 1850 Mr. Long removed from the Adelaide mission amidst the deep regrets of the friends there, by whom he was highly and deservedly esteemed, to prosecute missionary efforts in New Zealand, as stated in a preceding page. Mr. W. Wilsthire succeeded him at Adelaide. At the conference of 1850, 143 members were reported for the Adelaide mission, and ninety for Mount Barker; showing encouraging advancement for the year. The further progress of the missions in this colony must be reserved for the succeeding chapter.

The commencement of missionary operations at Sydney, the

capital of New South Wales next claims a brief notice. Application having been made from certain persons residing in that city to the brethren in South Australia for a missionary to be sent thither, it was deemed advisable to comply with the request, and in the spring of 1845 Mr. Wilson repaired to this important city about 1,200 miles distant from Adelaide. The prudence of this measure, though unquestionably well-meant, may be doubted. Had the brethren waited till the case had been laid before the General Missionary Committee, and its decision thereon had been received, it would have been a safer and a wiser course; and some subsequent calamities might, perhaps, have been avoided. Mr. Wilson, however, met with a kind reception, and was at first cheered with the prospect of success. Soon after his arrival he wrote: "We have sixty-eight members in society, three local preachers, and five class leaders. In several localities, especially two or three situate on Hunter's River, the people are crying, 'Come over and help us.'" These last-mentioned places, being ninety or a hundred miles from Sydney, could not well be supplied without an additional missionary. Towards the close of the year 1846 Mr. E. Tear was therefore sent from England to assist Mr. Wilson; and his assistance, it was hoped, would render the mission in New South Wales increasingly prosperous. But some serious reverses befel it, by which it was well-nigh ruined. The men who had taken the lead in sending for a missionary to Sydney proved to be of questionable character, and their reputation reflected no credit upon the infant cause. A separation took place, and the society and congregation in that city were greatly reduced. Mr. Wilson also met with discouragements at Morpeth, and being deficient in energy and firmness of character, he sank under them, relinquished the station, and withdrew from the connexion. Mr. Tear and the few friends at Sydney struggled hard to erect a small chapel there, and after twelve months of anxiety and toil they happily succeeded. The little sanctuary was opened for Divine worship on the 11th and 18th of March, 1849, and the society was encouraged to hope for better days. In the

succeeding chapter we shall be better able to furnish a more favourable account of the missions in this important and extensive colony.

A few words about the commencement of a mission in the district of Port Philip, now the important and wealthy colony of Victoria, must close our notice for the present of the colonial or foreign missions of the connexion. Some friends from England having emigrated thither were naturally wishful for a missionary of their own denomination to be sent to minister to their spiritual necessities; and at the conference of 1849 Mr. John Ride, an old and eminently successful missionary in England, was appointed to this inviting field of labour. In December of the same year the foundation stone of a new chapel was laid in La Trobe Street, Melbourne; and forty members were reported for the mission at the conference of 1850. The further progress of this mission must be reserved for the following chapter.

The subjoined statistics of the connexion will show the progress of the body as a whole, from the conference of 1840 to that of 1850:—

STATISTICS FROM 1840 TO 1850.

1841.—Travelling preachers 495, local preachers 6,860, members 75,967, chapels 1,219, Sunday-school scholars 64,730, teachers 13,407, deaths 883, increase of members for the year 1,977.

1842.—Travelling preachers 491, local preachers 7,326, members 79,515, chapels 1,223, Sunday-school scholars 70,064, teachers 14,187, deaths 917, increase of members 2,885.

1843.—Travelling preachers 488, local preachers 7,438, members 85,565, chapels 1,278, Sunday-school scholars 74,450, teachers 14,890, deaths 934, increase of members 6,042.

1844.—Travelling preachers 485, local preachers 7,508, members 88,405, chapels 1,293, Sunday-school scholars 73,771, teachers 14,975, deaths 993, increase of members 2,840.

1845.—Travelling preachers 506, local preachers 7,794, members 87,585, chapels 1,189, Sunday-school scholars 81,455, teachers 15,268, deaths 1,122, decrease of members 820.

1846.—Travelling preachers 495, local preachers 7,677, members 87,986, chapels 1,157, Sunday-school scholars 79,497, teachers 15,534, deaths 993, increase of members 401.

1847.—Travelling preachers 502, local preachers 7,840, members 86,795, chapels 1,421, Sunday-school scholars 83,566, teachers 15,041, deaths 1,235, decrease of members 1,191.

1848.—Travelling preachers 518, local preachers 8,056, members 89,401, chapels 1,473, Sunday-school scholars 87,273, teachers 16,469, deaths 1,336, increase of members 2,606.

1849.—Travelling preachers 513, local preachers 8,291, members 95,557, chapels 1,511, Sunday-school scholars 94,876, teachers 18,169, deaths 1,213, increase of members 6,166.

1850.—Travelling preachers 519, local preachers 8,524, members 104,762, chapels 1,555, Sunday-school scholars 103,310, teachers 20,114, deaths 1,537, increase of members 9,205.

Number of deaths in the ten years ..	11,163
Increase of members ditto	30,772
Increase of travelling preachers	32
Increase of local preachers	1,974
Increase of chapels	406
Increase of Sabbath-school scholars ..	42,802
Number of class-leaders	6,162

In concluding this chapter it may be proper to notice a few alterations made in the rules of the connexion. Those which related to the salaries of the preachers were slightly modified, so as to admit of some little addition being made thereto. Arrangements were made for admitting office-bearers of four or more years standing as hearers into district meetings and conferences, though not delegated to attend those assemblies. The connexional rules were also consolidated, and published in a separate volume in 1849. This work was chiefly accomplished by Mr. John Flesher; and the arrangement being new, the style materially altered, and the whole accompanied with a very comprehensive alphabetical

index, and a synopsis of the connexional deed poll, rendered it a very laborious enterprise, which severely taxed his physical strength, and caused considerable delay in the publication.

It may not be improper to mention also some changes which took place among the principal office-bearers in the connexion.

The health of Mr. John Garner having so seriously failed as to render him unable to perform the duties of the missionary secretaryship, he was superannuated at the conference of 1848, and was succeeded by his brother, Mr. William Garner, who, as missionary secretary and the secretary of the General Committee, rendered eminent service both to the missions and the entire connexion. He had been appointed to the office of the latter at the conference of 1846, when he succeeded the late Mr. John Hallam as joint book steward, and by his efficiency had excited hopes of future usefulness, which happily were fully realized.

CHAPTER XIX.

Revived prosperity of Tunstall District—Progress of Nottingham District—Increase in Hull District—Progress of Sunderland District—Decline and revival of Norwich District—Progress of Manchester District—Decline and revival of Brinkworth District—Progress of Leeds District Progress of Bristol District—Progress of London District—Progress of the Missions under the care of the General Missionary Committee—Progress of the Canadian Missions, increase of Stations, Missionaries, and Members—The Societies in the Eastern States of America—The progress of those in the Western States—Progress of the Missions in South Australia—Progress of the Missions in New South Wales—Progress of the Missions in Victoria—Progress of the Missions in New Zealand—Formation of a Society in Tasmania—Statistics of the Connexion at the Conference of 1860—Brief notices of Messrs. H. Bourne W. Clowes, J. G. Black, J. Reynard, J. Garner, J. Briggs, T. Dawson, J. Nixon, R. Atkinson, J. Day, and J. Bourne.

IN the present chapter we purpose to record the progress of the connexion from the conference of 1850 to the Jubilee conference, 1860, at the latter of which this history terminates.

We begin with Tunstall district. During the last three years of the period named, under the superintendency of Mr. P. Pugh, Tunstall circuit was favoured with showers of spiritual blessings, above 300 souls having been brought to the Lord, and united in church-fellowship.

Tunstall chapel was also greatly enlarged. This chapel was originally built in 1821, within a few yards of the first chapel built in the connexion, since converted into dwelling houses, and was enlarged in 1834, so as to render it capable of holding 1000 persons. The prosperity of the cause, however, demanded increased accommodation, and it was resolved to meet this demand

during the Jubilee year of the denomination. The chapel was therefore almost entirely taken down, the walls were raised about ten feet, and considerable additions were made both to the length and width of the edifice; being made fifty-one feet in breadth, and eighty-eight feet in length, and capable of accommodating 1,500 persons. The body of the chapel is of substantial brick work, and the front of stone, with columns and entablature of the Ionic order, giving the edifice an imposing and noble appearance. The cost of the undertaking was about £2,750, and the amount raised towards it approached £1000. A noble school-room, three stories high, presents an imposing aspect in front of the chapel, in which about a thousand children receive religious instruction on the Lord's day. The chapel, school, and preacher's house, are all becoming the oldest circuit in the connexion, and may be regarded as emblematical of the progress of the community from a state of infancy and feebleness to one of maturity and strength.

Darlaston circuit was likewise favoured with great prosperity during the three years' superintendency of Mr. G. Bagley. Several hundred members were added to the societies, and through the munificence of R. Thompson, Esq., of Bilston, and the liberality of many other friends, great reduction was made in the chapel debts. During the ensuing year Bilston was made the head of a new circuit, which reported 900 members to the conference of 1860.

Burland circuit made Whitchurch branch into a separate circuit, and in the following year made an encouraging addition to its numbers. These brief statements must suffice for the foregoing stations.

Birmingham circuit merits a more lengthy notice. A favourable report of its progress for a few years previous to the conference of 1850 was inserted in our last chapter. The number of members reported that year for the home branch was 330. The next year was one of some, though not of great advancement, the increase of members being about thirty. This was the last year of Mr. H.

Leech's five years successful superintendency. At its close he had the satisfaction of leaving it in a far more prosperous state than that in which he found it, though it had considerably improved during the two preceding years, under the superintendency of Mr. Graham. Mr. Leech was succeeded by Mr. James Pritchard, who also remained five years, which, like the preceding five years, were a period of considerable prosperity. The number of members reported to the conference of 1856 was 476, being 117 more than in 1851. But much greater proportionate improvement was realized in chapels and Sunday-schools. A new chapel had been built in the west end of the town during the superintendency of Mr. Leech. Another, and a larger one, was needed in the east; Inge-street chapel having become much too small for the increasing society and congregation. Vigorous efforts were speedily made to provide for this necessity. An eligible site of land was procured in Gooch street, and the corner stone of a commodious chapel and school-room was laid by the late Sir John Ratcliffe, on the 23rd of August, 1852, when an eloquent and truly catholic address was delivered by the Rev. Brewin Grant, Independent minister. The building progressed, and in due time was opened for Divine worship. As it provided accommodation for 700 hearers, and 400 Sabbath scholars, and nearly £600 were raised towards the cost of erection, it was hoped that it would be highly advantageous to the cause in the eastern part of the town; but this hope, unhappily, has not yet been fully realized.

In November, 1853, the corner stone of another chapel and school-room was laid in Lord street, in the north-east of the town, and opened for Divine worship in July following. This is a small but beautiful chapel, capable of seating 350 persons, and has a school-room underneath, embracing all the length and breadth of the building. The entire cost was about £800, nearly the half of which was raised by subscription. The three chapels just mentioned stand in a triangular position, about an equal distance from each other, at the outskirts of the old part of the

town, amidst a rapidly increasing population, composed chiefly of the labouring classes.

In the same month in which Lord street chapel was opened, the foundation stone of another new chapel was laid at Nechell's Green, at the north-east end of the borough of Birmingham, about a mile distant from that in Lord street. This chapel was built without galleries, and would only seat 250 persons; but being situated in a newly inhabited locality, amidst an increasing population, provision was made for the erection of galleries when necessary, and land was secured for the purposes of a school.

Besides the erection of these new chapels, one was purchased at Sparkbrook, in the suburbs of the town. Two large rooms were also occupied in other parts of the borough, in which Sabbath-schools were taught, and Divine service was held. This increased provision for Sabbath-school institutions was followed by gratifying results; the scholars rose to nearly 900, almost treble the number reported five years before.

Mr. Pritchard was succeeded by Mr. John Morton in 1856, and during the two years of his superintendency the circuit continued to advance. There was an increase of 124 members, and of a proportionate number of Sabbath scholars; and another small chapel was erected in the town, in Morville-street, which was opened for divine worship in April, 1858.

Mr. Joseph Grieves succeeded Mr. Morton in 1858, and during the ensuing year the school-room under Lord-street chapel having become too small two houses were converted to school purposes at a cost of about £90, which amount was raised by extra efforts. Some addition was also made to the members of society in the circuit, and to the teachers and scholars of the Sabbath-schools. The number of members reported to the conference of 1860 was 741, a small number for such a town, but more than double the number reported in 1850. The Sabbath-school teachers and scholars were also more than doubled during the same period. This amount of progress for ten years should be regarded with

gratitude to Almighty God, and as affording ground to hope for enlarged prosperity for the future.

Oswestry circuit also made considerable progress during the last three years, 300 members having been added to the societies, and three new chapels having been erected during the superintendency of Mr. James Prosser. One of these chapels was erected by Sir John Kynaston, the Lord, it is believed, having graciously inclined his heart to this good work in answer to prayer. The year following also, under the superintendency of Mr. H. Wheeler, the circuit continued to progress, and realized a considerable accession to its membership.

Lichfield circuit also made some encouraging progress during the period to which this chapter refers. The city of Lichfield was visited by the missionaries in the early days of the community, as noticed in a former portion of this volume; but the violent opposition with which they had to contend caused them to relinquish the place. Burton circuit afterwards made several attempts to establish a cause there, but did not succeed in forming a permanent society. In the autumn of 1836 Darlaston and Birmingham circuits united in the support of two missionaries, whose labours were to be devoted to this ancient city and the district around. For some time they preached in the open-air, and then an old malt-house in a back street was taken on rent. Good was done in this inconvenient place, and the small society which had been formed was steadfast and persevering. In 1847 the friends succeeded in erecting a small chapel, which was opened for divine worship in January, 1848.

The missionaries preached at many other places, and though they had to endure many hardships and privations they succeeded in forming some small societies. In Darlaston circuit's report for 1837 it is said, "In conjunction with Birmingham circuit we have two missionaries employed at Lichfield and the adjacent villages. The Lord has opened the way, and souls have been converted. The preachers have had to struggle with difficulties through the winter, but the prospect is now brightening. There are fifty

members on the mission." The mission prospered during the summer, and in December following it was made into a separate circuit, with 120 members. In the stations of the following conference we find Mr. Richard Ward appointed to this new circuit, which then contained 150 members. Mr. Ward had been the superintendent of the mission from the commencement; and to his patient endurance of incredible privations, and his prudence and perseverance, under God, is chiefly to be attributed the measure of success which was realized. During the ensuing year the small societies acquired greater stability, though but a trifling addition was made to their number of members. For several years, however, this feeble circuit had to contend with formidable difficulties, and made but little progress till the opening of new collieries within its borders brought an influx of inhabitants, and among them some active and useful members of the Primitive Methodist societies. These things, among others, contributed to the improvement of the circuit, and added to its numerical strength. In 1850 it reported 250 members, and in 1860 it contained 510, a little more than double the number in 1850. It had also twelve connexional chapels, thirteen Sabbath-schools, and a proportionate number of teachers and scholars.

Hadnall circuit, in a thinly populated district, also made considerable progress during these ten years; having risen from 175 members in 1850, to 350 in 1860, the number being exactly doubled. The progress in chapels and financial affairs was equally encouraging.

Other circuits in the district made some advancement during the period under consideration; but the district, as a whole, did not progress during the former part of this period. During the last three years, however, it was again favoured with great prosperity, and reported an increase of 2,211 members for the ten years.

Nottingham district was something more successful. Nottingham First Circuit and its branches form, unhappily, an exception; though some improvement took place during the last three years;

but Nottingham Second Circuit, including Oxton branch, realised an increase of 360 members, or something more.

In the populous town of Sheffield, and the district around, much greater progress was secured than in Nottingham Second Circuit. In 1850 Sheffield circuit and Rotherham branch contained 967 members. In the following year the number reported was 1,012. In 1852 the number was further increased to 1,039. During the following year the friends succeeded in erecting two noble school-rooms, at the cost of about £500, the whole of which was raised by voluntary efforts. There was, however, a small diminution in the number of members reported to the conference of 1853, it being only 1,035, four fewer than in the preceding year, the Rotherham branch having somewhat declined. But Mr. John Brownson was then appointed to the superintendency of the circuit, and his wisdom and dilligence were crowned with his usual success. For the first year the increase of members was not very great, the number reported being 1,064; but other considerable improvements were effected, and a foundation was laid for future prosperity. In the ensuing winter a blessed revival of religion took place. In some instances husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, were brought into liberty in the same meetings, and returned home together rejoicing in the God of their salvation. Old and young, and persons of greatly diversified character, were made partakers of divine grace, and walked in newness of life. The increase of members for the year was 150. Stanley-street chapel, Sheffield, became too small for the increasing congregation and school, and a new one was erected on the same site, capable of seating nearly 900 persons, having commodious school-rooms and vestries underneath. It was opened for divine worship in October, 1855, and greatly contributed to the influence and progress of the society in the town. The number of members reported to the conference of this year was 1,411, being an increase of 200 for the year. During the following year the circuit was divided into two: the First circuit reported 764 members to the ensuing conference, and the second 703, being an increase of 56 for the year. During

the four years of Mr. Brownson's superintendency the number of members rose from 1,035 to 1,467, above a hundred a year on an average. Proportionate improvement was also made in chapels, preaching-rooms and Sabbath-schools. Mr. R. Parks succeeded Mr. Brownson as superintendent of Sheffield First circuit, and Mr. W. Cutts took charge of the Second. Happily, both circuits continued to prosper. The First circuit reported an increase of 120 members for the following year, and 100 for the succeeding one. The next year, however, there was a decrease, the number reported to the conference of 1860 being only 872. The Second circuit was more prosperous; the increase for the first year was 130, and for the second 150, including those in Rawmarsh branch, now Rotherham circuit; though it also had a decrease in the next year, the number reported to the conference of 1860 was 571, and for Rotherham circuit 390. The total number in the three circuits was 1,833, being nearly double the number reported in 1850! Such a degree of prosperity in this large town and populous district, calls for fervent gratitude to Almighty God from all who are interested in the welfare of the community.

Lincoln circuit also made some advancement during the same period. The number of members reported in 1850 being only 404, and in 1860 it had increased to 625, being above 200 increase for the ten years.

Ashby-de-la-Zouch also made considerable progress, having risen from 452 members in 1850, to 623 in 1860, having added nearly one third to its number.

It is a cause of gratitude and rejoicing to find the cause progressing encouragingly in another large town in this district. In 1850 Leicester circuit reported 1,018 members. In 1853 we find the circuit made into two; the First circuit containing 642 members, and the Second 525. Unhappily the Second circuit had to pass through a series of unwonted trials, and hardly retained its number of members. The First was somewhat affected for a time by the agitations caused in the Second, but it maintained its ground. In 1857 it reported 714 members, seventy-two more

than in 1850. Mr. John Brownson entered upon the superintendency of the circuit in July, 1857, and soon began to realize his wonted success. The number of members reported to the conference of 1858 was 750, an apparent increase of thirty-six only; but the good work was then progressing encouragingly, and continued to advance during the year. The increase of members for the second year was 120. During this progress George-street chapel, the largest belonging to the denomination in Leicester, became too small for the society and congregation, being regularly filled to overflowing, and many applicants for sittings could not be accommodated. It was therefore determined to make an effort to erect a new chapel at a convenient distance from George-street, and an eligible site was secured in Curzon-street, in a new part of the town, near Humberstone-road. Liberal contributions were obtained towards the expense of the undertaking, and the foundation-stone was laid by J. D. Harris, Esq., M.P., on April 25th, 1859; and after several unavoidable delays the new chapel was opened in January, 1860, the late Dr. Legge and other influential ministers officiating on the occasion. It is 48 feet by 42 feet, has a good gallery, and will seat 700 persons. Its entire cost amounted to £1500, towards which above one third was raised by contributions. It was encouragingly attended from the opening, and on Sabbath evenings was well filled. It soon became the birth-place of precious souls, and the ordinary income met the expenditure. It is gratifying to add that although nearly 200 persons withdrew from the old to the new chapel, their places were soon filled up at George-street, where the congregation retained its usually crowded appearance. The friends at George-street generously assisted towards the erection of the new chapel in Curzon-street, and shortly afterwards engaged in the erection of two new school-rooms in connection with their own chapel. The number of members for Leicester First circuit reported to the conference of 1860 was 910, being only 108 fewer than it reported in 1850, though the Second circuit was made from it in 1853, with 525 members.

Horncastle circuit likewise progressed considerably. The little



chapel in the town became too small for the congregation, and a very commodious one was erected in its place in a central part of the town, at the opening of which the late celebrated Dr. Beaumont kindly assisted. The number of members in the circuit in 1850 was only 297. In 1860 the number had increased to 734, including the members in Conningsby branch, being more than double the number reported ten years before.

Kniveton circuit had an increase of thirty members, and succeeded in erecting a good chapel in an eligible situation in the town of Wirksworth, which became the head of the circuit.

The increase of members for the whole district during this period was 2,532, the number in the district in 1850 being 11,896, and 14,428 in 1860.

We must now chronicle the progress of Hull district. In the town of Hull the societies did not prosper so greatly as in the preceding ten years. One cause of this, it may readily be conceived, was the loss sustained by the death of Mr. Clowes. This eminently holy and useful minister died in the full assurance of faith on the 2nd of March, 1851, aged 71 years. He was the founder of the society in Hull, and for many years he laboured frequently there with uncommon energy and apostolical success. His ministry was attended with extraordinary power, and multitudes were brought to the Lord through his instrumentality. In his later years, he could not often preach; but in answer to his mighty prayers showers of spiritual blessings were frequently vouchsafed to the assemblies with which he worshipped. Like a prince he wrestled with God, and prevailed. During his public intercessions in behalf of his fellow-worshippers such a deep and glorious sense of the Divine presence frequently pervaded the sanctuary, as filled the guilty with dread and consternation, melted cold and frozen hearts into penitential grief, comforted mourning souls with the blessed hope of pardon, filled believers with peace and joy, and led many to exclaim, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" None but those who have enjoyed the privilege of

associating with Mr. Clowes in public worship can form adequate conceptions of the spiritual power and glory which commonly descended upon the audience through his fervent and believing supplications.

But it was not in public worship alone that Mr. Clowes rendered eminent service to the society at Hull. He watched over its interests in all respects, and incalculable advantages resulted from his paternal care, wise forethought, and prudent management. In meetings for church affairs the wisdom of his counsel, and the hallowed influence of his lofty piety, produced the most salutary effects. In his private intercourse with his colleagues in the ministry, and the office-bearers and the members of the church, his kindly disposition, fatherly advice, and highly devotional spirit, were eminently beneficial, and tended vastly to mature their religious character and promote their usefulness. It was no mean privilege to sit in the social circle where he was the presiding personage. The atmosphere in which he habitually breathed was so eminently heavenly and sanctifying, that every spiritually-minded person could not but intensely feel its elevating and transforming influence. He constantly sat with Christ in heavenly places, and earnestly sought to raise all his friends and associates to the same spiritual elevation and nearness to God. The moral grandeur of his character filled his friends and acquaintances with admiration, and excited them to emulate his lofty virtues, and aspire after his high religious attainments. The departure of such a man to the realms of the blessed could not but make a deep and powerful impression upon his surviving friends. "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" exclaimed Elisha, as he saw Elijah ascend to heaven in a chariot of fire. With similar sentiments of veneration and love did the surviving colleagues and friends of Mr. Clowes regard his departing spirit. His mortal remains were conducted to the grave in the cemetery at Hull amidst the tears and lamentations of thousands, who revered his memory and rightly appreciated his holy character. Thirty-seven regular ministers, his early companion and constant



friend, Mr. James Nixon, of Tunstall, and numerous office-bearers joined in the solemn procession; and Messrs. Bywater, Harland, and Lamb, had the mournful satisfaction of taking part in the funeral service. Nine years have elapsed since he was carried to the house appointed for all living, but his name is yet as ointment poured forth in the societies at Hull, and will be embalmed in their memory as long as life shall last. During our residence in this town not a whisper have we ever heard unfavourable to his exalted reputation; all bear testimony to his eminent sanctity and his sublime excellencies. Whatever strangers to his character may think of this brief description of his extraordinary piety and goodness, we are persuaded that no judicious friend at Hull will think it exaggerated. Our own conviction is that it falls far, very far, short of the lofty grandeur of his character, and of his exalted attainments in the religious life. We had the privilege of forming an intimate acquaintance with him about thirty years ago, and while we yield to no man in our estimation of the fervent spirit of David Brainerd, the saintly character of the seraphic Fletcher, the deep devotion of Thomas Walsh, the moral majesty of William Bramwell, the ardent piety of John Smith, or the profound humility of David Stoner, we regard William Clowes as inferior to none of those eminent men, and superior to most, or all of them, in the power of his prayers and the strength of his faith. Happy shall we be if our brief testimony to his high excellencies shall excite in the minds of survivors ardent desires to copy after his lofty example, and earnestly to seek those extraordinary degrees of faith and love by which he was distinguished. Further reference will be made to him in a notice of his early companion, Mr. H. Bourne.

The removal of this distinguished man from the midst of the societies in Hull, and the operation of other causes, exerted an unfavourable influence upon their state, and retarded their advancement for several years. Yet their efforts to promote chapel extension merit a brief record. The chapel in Mason-street had become much too small for the congregation before the death of

Mr. Clowes; and the last public meeting he attended was to make arrangements for the erection of a larger one in its place, in Jarratt-street, which it was subsequently determined should bear his honoured name. This chapel stands in the most eligible situation which the town can afford, and is a noble edifice of the Corinthian style of architecture. It is 78 feet long, 60 wide, and 37 feet high. It contains 1,200 lettable sittings, and about 200 free, besides a spacious school-room underneath, and numerous vestries or class-rooms, and other conveniences.

The long illness of Mr. Bywater, the superintendent of the circuit, and other causes, prevented as much money from being raised towards its erection as was anticipated, which left it encumbered with a heavy debt. Other unhappy circumstances afterwards occurred, which rendered any material reduction impracticable. A gentleman holding some property in the street behind the chapel, conceived that he had a right to compensation for damage done to the light of his houses, and made an exorbitant demand. A lawsuit was the result; and though he afterwards lowered his demands, and the lawsuit was stopped, the case proved an expensive affair to the trust estate. The chapel vacated in Mason Street also became a serious burden to the trustees of Jarratt Street chapel, as they were unable to meet with a purchaser for it, or to let it for the amount equal to the interest of money borrowed on its account.

In the autumn of 1855 Jarratt-street society and congregation were somewhat lessened by the withdrawal of about seventy members and some hearers, to form a society and congregation in connection with Holborn-street chapel, Holderness-road, a commodious place of worship which had been vacated by the Independents, and which some members of the Primitive Methodists resident in the neighbourhood took upon rent, with the hope of raising a new interest in that locality. Whether the spirit of enterprise, which is generally to be commended, was in this case governed by prudence we shall not stay to inquire. Certainly the taking of Holborn-street chapel weakened for a time the interest of that in Jarratt-street. But Jarratt-street congregation after-



wards recovered the loss, and the sale of Mason-street chapel in 1858 brought effectual relief to the trustees of Clowes' chapel. The friends in Holborn-street struggled nobly with their onerous undertaking, and by vigorous efforts met all financial demands; but in the summer of 1858 the majority of those who were responsible for the rent of the chapel declined to bear the burden any longer, unless more satisfactory arrangements could be made. The landlord offered them relief in one particular; and the circuit's funds having so much improved as to admit of another preacher being employed, assistance was afforded them in the shape of a more regular supply for the pulpit. As soon as this measure was adopted Holborn-street congregation encouragingly increased, whilst that at Jarratt-street suffered no diminution, but rather became larger than at any former period, though this improvement is to be attributed entirely to other causes.

In March, 1856, the beautiful chapel in Great Thornton-street was destroyed by fire. Happily it was insured for a considerable sum; this sum, with the liberality of the friends and the generosity of other communities, enabled the trustees to re-build the chapel without increasing the debt, and to render it even more convenient and substantial than before, as well as to enlarge the gallery, so as to accommodate about a hundred additional hearers.

It is to the credit of some liberal gentlemen of the Church of England that we have to add, that a vacant Episcopal chapel, contiguous to Thornton-street, capable of accommodating about 600 persons, with spacious vestries for schools, was placed at the disposal of the suffering society and congregation, who were favoured with the gratuitous and unrestricted use of the premises till their own beautiful sanctuary was again ready for occupation; an instance of christian kindness and generosity which merits a grateful record.

The division of Hull circuit next claims our notice. For many years it had numerous branches and missions, extending over a considerable portion of the north of England, and some parts of the south and west. These branches were gradually made into

independent circuits; but not so rapidly in later years as in former ones, the evil of making circuits prematurely having impressed the minds of the leading men,—and the retention of some of the more prosperous branches being requisite to assist in the maintenance of the weaker and expensive ones. While Mr. Clowes lived there was also great reluctance on the part of several to be entirely severed from the circuit. His paternal kindness, and patriarchal piety and dignity were duly appreciated by the brethren, who rightly deemed it an inestimable privilege to have occasional intercourse with him in the circuit's quarterly meetings, and to share the benefit of his counsels and his prayers. But soon after his death amicable arrangements were made for a general division of the circuit. In December, 1852, Hull east branch was made into a separate circuit, and Patrington branch placed under its care; Scarborough branch was also made into an independent station, and undertook the supervision and pecuniary assistance of Tadcaster branch; Barton was made into a separate circuit; and Brigg branch remained under the care of Hull First circuit, the only station which it had now to assist. It had formerly been more prosperous, but had subsequently declined; but under the efficient superintendence of Mr. George Lamb a considerable improvement again took place, and a foundation laid for its future prosperity. In 1853 he was succeeded by Mr. George Austin, under whose superintendency the branch progressed so encouragingly, that in December of the same year it was deemed fit to be made into a separate circuit. It then contained 723 members, four travelling preachers, fifty local preachers, and fourteen connexional chapels. To the following conference it reported 807 members, and to that of 1855, 847, including 444 in Winterton branch. To prevent recurrence to this circuit we may here add that in 1857 it reported 458 members, and Winterton, then a separate circuit, 483; an encouraging increase for the two years, the former station under the superintendency of Mr. W. Lonsdale, and the latter under that of Mr. R. Langham. Mr. E. Tyas then took charge of Brigg circuit, and in connection with his zealous



colleague, Mr. P. Milson, and with the hearty co-operation of the office-bearers and the societies generally, had the satisfaction of witnessing still further improvement in all respects. The circuit reported 498 members in 1858, and 545 in 1860, being an increase of eighty-seven for the three years. Great relief was also afforded to Brigg chapel by a successful effort to reduce the debt £300. Waddingham chapel was rebuilt on a greatly enlarged scale. Other considerable reductions of debt were also effected, and the circuit rose considerably in prosperity and strength.

Mr. Thomas Ratcliffe took charge of Winterton circuit; and under his successful superintendency the station made considerable advancement. It reported 538 members to the conference of 1858, and 556 to that of 1859; being an increase of seventy-three for the two years. Proportionate or greater improvement was also made in the financial department, and in chapels and schools. But in the following year an unhappy occurrence caused a declension in the circuit.

Returning to Hull First circuit we find it struggling in the midst of discouragements for some time, and unable to retain its former number of members. But during the last three years of the period under review in this chapter the tide of prosperity gradually returned. In 1857 it reported an increase of thirty-six members, in 1858 an increase of fifty, in 1859 an increase of seventy-eight, and in 1860 an increase of seventy-two; the total number of members reported to the conference of this year being 1,600.

Hull Second circuit also met with many discouragements, and for a few years suffered some diminution in its number of members; but it likewise began to recover its prosperity in 1856. In 1857 it reported an increase of seventeen members, in 1858 an increase of four, in 1859 an increase of eighty-three, and in 1860 an increase of forty; the total number of members then in the circuit being 940.

Patrington branch, after passing through some severe trials, began to recover its strength about the same time. Mr. Thomas Bennett took charge of it in 1856; in 1857 he was favoured with

the zealous assistance of Mr. Henry Clark, his devoted colleague, and the branch gradually rose into prosperity. In March, 1859, it reported 318 members, being an increase of fifty for the year; and being able to meet its expenses it was then made into a separate circuit, with a pleasing prospect of further improvement. In 1860 it reported 366 members.

Scotter circuit made its wonted advancement during the first portion of the period under consideration. Then some painful circumstances occurred which disturbed its harmony, brought reproach upon the good cause, and weakened the societies. But after passing through the trials which befel them they began to recover their former vigour; their wanted prosperity returned, and during the three years' superintendency of Mr. A. Wornsop a great accession was made to the societies. The number of members reported to the conference of 1859 was 907, being between two and three hundred more than in 1850. In the following year, however, there was a decrease of thirty-four.

Between the conference of 1852 and that of 1853 Doncaster branch was made into a separate circuit, which reported 541 members to the latter. During the next three years, under the superintendency of Mr. R. Cheeseman, it made some, though not rapid, progress, and a large and beautiful chapel was erected in the town, which provided accommodation for several hundred hearers more than the former one. The next three years, under the superintendency of Mr. Thomas Newsome, the circuit advanced more rapidly. The number of members reported to the conference of 1859 was 780, above 200 more than in 1856; and an equally proportionate improvement took place in the number and size of the country chapels. But in the following year an unhappy event caused the loss of a portion of Doncaster society, and a decrease of members in the circuit.

A short time after Doncaster branch was made into a circuit, Epworth branch of Scotter circuit was also made into an independent station, and reported 624 members to the conference of 1853. During the next two years this new circuit unhappily

declined; but during the five succeeding ones it more than recovered, and reported a few more members in 1860 than in 1853; considerable improvement having also been made in chapel accommodation.

Grimsby circuit claims a more lengthy notice. It reported 830 members in 1850, having made considerable progress during the few preceding years. Happily, it continued to advance, though during the next seven years its progress was but slow,—the increase of members for these years not much exceeding a hundred. During the three following years the improvement was greater. The number of members reported to the conference of 1860 was 1145, being an increase of above two hundred for the two years, and of above three hundred for the preceding ten years. The chapel improvement was greater in proportion than that of the societies. Several large chapels, and some small ones, were built in the country places; and in the town, chapel extension bore some proportion to the great increase of population. In 1821 a small chapel was purchased for the sum of £300. In 1839 it was enlarged by the erection of a gallery and of a school room. In 1846 a more extensive enlargement took place, to accommodate the growing congregation and Sabbath-school, which left a debt on the premises of £600. The cause continuing to advance, the debt was gradually reduced, till in the year 1858 it was entirely liquidated; and as the chapel had become too small for the church and congregation it was resolved to erect a new and larger one. A building site was secured at a great price, in a most eligible situation in one of the principal streets. The foundation stone of a new chapel in the Doric style was laid on January 12th, 1859, by Mr. Hugh Campbell, superintendent of the circuit. It is 63 feet long, 47 feet wide, and 32 feet high from the floor to the ceiling, and, galleries included, will seat upwards of a thousand persons. Behind the chapel two good school-rooms and four vestries have been erected, affording great facilities for Sabbath-school tuition, and for class and prayer-meetings. The erection of this noble sanctuary and its important appendages was a great

accession to the cause, and vastly enlarged its means of usefulness in this prosperous town.

Between the conference of 1853 and that of 1854 Market Rasen branch was formed into an independent station with 400 members, and made gradual advancement. In 1860 it reported 607 members, being an increase of 207 for the six years.

The neighbouring circuit of Louth made much greater advancement. In 1850 it reported only 422 members; in 1860 it contained 884, having more than doubled its number of members in the ten years. This great addition was not made in two or three years of prosperity followed by serious declension; but was the result, under the divine blessing, of continuous and well-directed efforts from year to year, every succeeding year being favoured with more or less prosperity. Messrs. Knowles, Campbell, Worsnop, C. Kendall, T. Whitehead, and their excellent colleagues, were happy to share in the co-operation of the local preachers, leaders, and friends, and working harmoniously and zealously, were cheered with this encouraging success.

With such additions made to the members of the church, it could not but follow that greatly increased accommodation would be required for enlarged congregations. In the town of Louth the chapel became too small for the congregation, and was re-built on a greatly enlarged scale, and made a spacious edifice, having also in connection with it large school-rooms and other conveniences, thereby contributing to the prosperity of the society, congregation, and Sabbath-school.

Several additional chapels were built in the country places, and others greatly enlarged and improved.

Alford branch of the circuit also made encouraging progress. The number of members reported to the conference of 1850 was only 194, that reported to the conference of 1860 was 316, being an increase of more than one-third for the ten years. Equal improvements, if not greater, were made in chapel accommodation; some new ones being erected, and Alford chapel greatly enlarged.

At this conference Alford was recognised as the head of an independent circuit.

Besides the improvement in the home branch and in the Alford branch, Louth circuit was also favoured with success in home missionary labours. Spilsby, a market-town, which had frequently been visited to little purpose, was visited again about the beginning of 1855. Mr. R. Langham then commenced missionary operations there, and met with success. A room was taken on rent, and a society formed. Soon afterwards a site of land for building purposes was purchased in a new part of the town, and in due time a small chapel was erected thereon, which assisted in giving stability to the cause, as well as in affording increased facilities for extending the work of God.

In 1837 Spilsby and another place or two were separated from Alford branch and made into a separate branch. Mr. Thomas Whittaker, who was appointed to this small branch, was successful in his missionary efforts in neighbouring villages, and the branch reported seventy-nine members in 1858. The ensuing year was also one of some progress, there being an increase of thirty-four members, making 103 in all. During the following year, however, there was a considerable falling off in the number of members.

Driffield circuit was also favoured with a degree of prosperity, having risen from 833 members in 1850 to 1,019 in 1860. Several new chapels were also erected, and others greatly enlarged; that in the town was made capable of accommodating about double the number of hearers it formerly did.

Hornsea branch made somewhat greater progress in proportion. In 1850 it reported only 177 members, in 1860 it contained 252. Some new chapels were also erected in this branch.

Bridlington branch was made into a separate circuit at Christmas, 1858, and reported some progress to the conference of 1860.

The neighbouring circuit of Scarborough passed through some severe trials, and experienced some declension for a time; but it happily recovered the shock, and more than regained what it had

lost. In 1850 it reported 619 members, in 1860 it contained 870, being 251 increase for the ten years. Some new chapels were also erected, and others improved. Scarborough chapel became entirely clear of debt, and being much too small for the congregation, preparatory measures were taken in 1859 towards the erection of a new one, in order to meet the demands of the growing cause.

Filey chapel had also become too small for the improving congregation, and was therefore enlarged, so as to render it capable of seating double the number of hearers. The cost of the undertaking was about £500, towards which about £200 was raised by contributions.

Barton circuit likewise made a little advancement, having risen from 524 members in 1850, to 650 in 1860. It also erected a chapel at New Holland, and made other improvements in the chapel and school premises.

We have condensed the progress of the stations in the Hull district into as small a space as practicable, and shall close our notice of it by stating that the increase of members in the entire district, after transferring 1509 to London district, from the year 1850 to 1860, was 2114,—there being 11,763 members in the former year, and 14,877 in the latter.

Sunderland district was also favoured with a large measure of prosperity. In the town of Sunderland an additional chapel was bought, a very spacious one was erected at Hetton, and several other chapels were erected in different parts of the circuit, and the number of members rose from 1,623 in 1850, to 1,979 in 1860, being an increase of nearly 400 members for the ten years.

Brompton circuit reported 300 members to the conference of 1860, being an increase of seventy-six for the ten years. It also made Stokesley into a separate circuit.

South Shields circuit erected a good chapel and school-room underneath it, at the west end of South Shields, for Templetown society. The foundation stone was laid August 1st, 1859, by R. Wallis, Esq., J.P.; and R. Ingham, Esq., M.P., presided at a public meeting in connection with the opening, in December

following. The chapel will seat between six and seven hundred persons, and the school will accommodate near 400 children.

North Shields society engaged in a more onerous undertaking. The foundation stone of a large chapel was laid May 28th, 1860, by H. Taylor, Esq., member of parliament for the borough, who promised the handsome sum of £100 towards the erection, above £700 having been previously raised by other contributions. The chapel will seat omething more than 800 persons, and the school-room underneath will accommodate several hundred scholars. The want of such a sanctuary had long impeded the progress of the cause in the town. The circuit, however, had added 154 members to its societies during the ten years under consideration.

Newcastle circuit, after passing through severe trials, regained its former prosperity, and reported 1,000 members to the conference of 1860, being 100 increase for the ten years, having also improved its chapels and provided increased accommodation for hearers and scholars.

Hexham made Haltwhistle into an independent circuit, but had no increase in its membership.

Darlington circuit progressed considerably, having risen from 424 members in 1850, to 720 in 1860, being near three hundred increase. Berwick added sixty to its former number of 235. Westgate had an increase of 115. Alston experienced great prosperity, having more than doubled its number of members, the number reported in 1850 being only 215, and that reported in 1860 being 484. Stockton realized an increase of 157, and Guisborough branch nearly doubled its number. Durham was favoured with pentecostal effusions of the Holy Spirit, and reported an increase of near 700 members; the number reported in 1850 being 1,108 and that in 1860 being 1,804. Whitehaven circuit had an increase of 130 members. Barnard Castle had an increase of nearly 200, and made Kendal into a circuit, which reported 248 members to the conference of 1860, being more than double the number reported for it in 1850. Shotley bridge added more than 200 to its membership, reporting 355 in 1850, and 564 in 1860.

Wolsingham more than doubled its numbers, reporting only 270 in 1850, and 600 in 1860. Allendale was still more prosperous; it reported only 263 members in 1859, and 613 in 1860. And Penrith, made into a circuit, added a few to its small numbers.

The district, though for several years apparently under a cloud, so revived and prospered during the last three years, that it had a clear increase of 3455 members for the ten years to which this chapter refers, and considerable reductions were made in chapel debts.

Norwich district passed through a fiery ordeal during several years of the period now under review. Considerable numbers of its best friends and supporters emigrated to various parts of America and Australasia, and numerous societies were thereby reduced to great feebleness, whilst some became extinct. Other causes contributed to inflict a serious injury upon most of the stations, and a considerable declension was reported for a few successive years. More recently the district began to revive. Some of the stations made rapid progress. Yarmouth added several hundred members to its societies, and greatly enlarged its chapel and school accommodation. Cambridge obtained an additional chapel in the suburbs of the town, employed an extra preacher, and extended its borders with considerable success. Lynn circuit erected a large chapel in the town, capable of seating a thousand persons, in place of the former one which had become too small, and was favoured with a revival of the work of God. Downham circuit experienced a return of its former prosperity, showers of blessings having been vouchsafed to its various societies. Most other circuits showed signs of new life; and before the conference of 1860 the district had more than recovered the losses it had sustained, and was again in a healthy and prosperous state. The number of members it reported was 12,576, being near 900 more than in 1850, though Peterborough and Holbeach stations had been transferred to other districts.

Manchester district made some advancement during the period in question. Manchester Second circuit progressed materially

during a portion of the time, erected a beautiful chapel in Moss Lane, in a new part of the city, and reported considerably more members in 1860 than in 1850. Oldham circuit had an increase of 244. Liverpool circuit also made considerable progress, having an increase of 100 members after making Birkenhead into a circuit with 203 members. Preston made some advancement. Chorley, a feeble circuit in 1850, with only 166 members, reported 250 to the conference of 1860. Most other circuits also made some improvement; and though some of the stations declined, and Rochdale circuit suffered seriously through the improper conduct of a preacher, whom the conference of 1858 deemed it its duty to discontinue, the district on the whole reported an increase of 1,602 members for the ten years, 9,616 members being reported in 1850, and 11,218 in 1860. Considerable improvement in chapels also took place during this period. Haslingden circuit erected a good chapel at Accrington, and Liverpool circuit two in the town.

Brinkworth district shared for a time in similar trials and discouragements to those which befel the districts before-named, and suffered some diminution in its number of members; but it likewise gradually recovered its strength, its former prosperity returned, and during the last few years of the period under review it reported encouraging progress. We find no necessity to enter into details about the respective stations, most of which made more or less progress, but must record the establishment of a cause at Malmesbury, and in the city of Winchester, notwithstanding former opposition and discouragements.

The brutal treatment to which the early missionaries were subjected at Malmesbury is narrated in a former part of this volume. Brinkworth circuit, with zeal and enterprise highly to be commended, made several spirited attempts to establish a cause therein, but were as frequently defeated, till the spring of 1854, when it sent Mr. George Warner to re-commence missionary operations. He began to preach in the open-air, when the spirit of persecution again manifested itself, and attempts were made to prevent his

zealous efforts by the strong arm of law. But this attempt was unsuccessful, preaching in the open-air was continued during the summer with some success, and in the ensuing winter a barn was fitted up for religious worship, in which many souls were brought to Christ. The congregation gradually increased and the society flourished, till enlarged accommodation became requisite. Colonel Rushout, M.P., kindly consented to enfranchise a site of lifehold land, that a connexional chapel might be erected upon it; liberal contributions were obtained, and in due time a commodious sanctuary was erected, which was opened for divine worship in 1856. The society then numbered nearly sixty members, and the prospect of success was very encouraging. Malmesbury became the permanent residence of a regular preacher, and in December, 1858, was made the head of a separate circuit, with two preachers and 260 members. It embraces several places in the north-western portion of Wiltshire, and a number in Gloucestershire, formerly included in the Hawkesbury Upton mission. The success of the community in this ancient town, after repeated efforts being employed in vain, affords abundant encouragement to the spirit of enterprise and perseverance.

The success attendant on another effort to establish a cause in Winchester is scarcely less encouraging. Mitcheldever, or Basingstoke, circuit re-commenced missionary operations in this city in the spring of 1852. In October of the same year the friends succeeded in obtaining the use of the corn exchange for their religious services, in which preaching was regularly conducted till the February following, when a room was taken for the purpose. Some persecution and slander again befel the preachers and their friends, but their humble and zealous labours were crowned with a measure of success. Sinners were brought to God under their instrumentality, and a society was formed.

In November, 1853, the friends of the cause were encouraged to purchase the chapel vacated by the Independents, after building the new sanctuary mentioned in a former chapter. Through the kindness of the Rev. W. Thorn and the leading men of his church



the chapel was conveyed to the Primitive Methodists at a moderate price. It was opened for Divine worship in the month just named, when Mr. Thorn, the late Dr. Beaumont, and other ministers officiated on the occasion. Mr. Bishop, who had suffered imprisonment in the city, as previously narrated, had also the privilege and pleasure of assisting at the opening services, when the promising aspect of things, as compared with former days, afforded no small measure of gratification to him and others. "In this county," (Hampshire) he says, "we have now Basingstoke, Andover, and Southampton circuits, and Winchester, Buriton, Portsmouth, and Isle of Wight Missions. These seven stations contain nearly 2,000 members, and they employ twelve itinerant ministers, besides local preachers, class-leaders, and Sabbath-school teachers, in proportionate numbers; and the extensive circuits of Newbury and Reading have also several societies in Hampshire.

"Let any christian man calmly contrast the religious state of this country now with what it was nearly thirty years ago, and he will find facts which must cause his heart to rejoice. The religious and educational efforts which have been employed for the benefit of the people have produced great results. Religious services and Sabbath-schools have been greatly increased. There are villages in which we found, in 1832, only *one* religious service on the Sabbath day, and *no* week evening lecture, and *no* Sabbath-school; in which there may now be found *four*, or more, religious services on the Sabbath, *two* or more on week evenings, and *two* Sabbath-schools; and he must be under the influence of strong prejudice who will not admit that the labours and sufferings of Primitive Methodist preachers have, under God, had much to do in producing this happily altered and advanced state of things. Let this be admitted or denied by erring men, the record of these brethren is on high, and their work with their God."

Leeds district made some advancement during the period under review. A few of the circuits declined more or less, and others remained about stationary; but some made considerable progress,

and the district advanced on the whole. Leeds First circuit improved encouragingly; and Dewsbury branch prospered so that it was made into a separate circuit,—and in 1860 reported more than double the number of members it contained in 1850. The neighbouring circuits of Bradford and Halifax made some progress notwithstanding some severe trials through which they had to pass. Ripon circuit made Thirsk branch into a separate station, and also succeeded in erecting a commodious chapel in the ancient town of Knaresborough, which was made the head of a branch. And in the ancient city of York an elegant and spacious chapel was erected in a good situation, which gave a fresh impetus to the society, and contributed materially to the increase of the congregation and the progress of the cause. The number of members in York circuit was about one-third more in 1860 than in 1850. Burnley circuit also made some progress. The increase of members in the whole district was somewhat more than 1,200, though Middleham mission was transferred to the care of the General Missionary Committee.

Bristol district also made some advancement during the period in question. Bristol circuit succeeded in erecting several new chapels, and in adding about one-third to its number of members. The Cornish circuits of Redruth and St. Ives both made some progress, and were each divided into two, the former making St. Day and the places contiguous into a new circuit, and the latter, Penzance and the neighbouring places. In the last-mentioned town the commodious chapel became too small for the increasing congregation, and was greatly enlarged, affording increased facilities for the progress of the cause. The chapel at St. Day was also enlarged to meet the requirements of the growing church and congregation.

St. Austell mission had made such improvement while under the care of the General Missionary Committee, and especially during the superintendency of Mr. E. Powell, that it was again made into an independent station. Falmouth mission remained under the supervision of Redruth circuit. The number of stations

in Cornwall was about doubled, some additions were made to the societies, and the prospects of the connexion considerably improved.

Bath circuit made some progress, and Stroud more than doubled its number of members. Hereford circuit nearly doubled its members, and enlarged the chapel in the city. A few other stations in the district made some advancement, especially Tredegar, but do not claim separate notice. The district on the whole progressed about as much as most of the others in the connexion in proportion to its number of stations.

London district next claims a brief notice. This district was formed at the conference of 1853. It was composed of the three London circuits and of Saffron Walden circuit, which had belonged to Hull district; of Reading, Luton, High Wycombe, and Maidenhead circuits which had been connected with Brinkworth district, and of the missions under the care of the General Missionary Committee. The three London circuits made considerable progress during the period now under consideration. In 1850 London First circuit reported 639 members. In 1853 it made Sutton Street and the adjacent places into a separate circuit, with 469 members; yet there was about seventy more members in the parent circuit in 1860 than in 1850, previous to its division. Also one or more new chapels were erected; one Episcopal chapel was purchased near Kingsland Road, Coopers' Gardens' chapel, near Shoreditch church, was re-built on a greatly enlarged scale, and other chapels were taken on rent. Difficulties arose in connection with Coopers' Gardens' chapel which had not been anticipated, which produced much anxiety and considerable discouragement. But these were in time partially surmounted, and the prospect of ultimate relief became more cheering. This substantial edifice is situated in the midst of a densely populated district, and incalculable good has been done therein.

London Second circuit also made proportionate improvement. It succeeded in erecting a commodious chapel at Islington, which proved of considerable service, and another at Walworth, which,

Toddington chapel was also greatly enlarged at a considerable expense, nearly the whole of which was contributed at once, and arrangements made for the speedy payment of the rest.

A new chapel was also erected at Sharpenhoe under encouraging circumstances, and the society soon afterwards doubled its number of members. In societies, Sunday-schools, and chapel affairs, considerable advancement was made, and the missionary revenue was proportionately augmented.

Saffron Walden circuit pushed forward the good work, and made considerable progress both in erecting places of worship and in bringing sinners into the fold of Christ. It also made Wickham Brook and other places into a branch, which likewise made encouraging advancement.

We must now glance at the home missionary operations conducted under the management of the General Missionary Committee. We begin with the missions in the beautiful county of Kent. The first that claims our notice is that of Canterbury. In 1850 we find one missionary, Mr. N. Broadway, in this ancient city, and 128 members. Under his prudent management and zealous labours the mission had improved materiallly in the preceding year. During the ensuing one it prospered more abundantly, the number of members increased to 172. Great good was effected at the large village of Boughton, six miles from the city, where the late Mr. W. Plommer built a chapel for the use of the connexion, and rendered much service to the rising cause. It was opened for divine worship in June, 1851, when many sinners were brought into the liberty of the gospel. In the minutes of conference for that year we find Messrs. Broadway and Osborne appointed to Canterbury mission. God blessed their labours, and 215 members were reported to the following conference. Mr. John Guy succeeded Mr. Broadway in the superintendence of the mission, and under his indefatigable labours and those of his colleagues the mission continued to progress. An entrance was effected into the rising town of Ashford, and into some other places, and Mr. Guy had the satisfaction of leaving 317 members

in the mission in 1855. Ashford and the adjacent places were then annexed to Maidstone mission, and Messrs. Toulson and Rumfit were appointed to the Canterbury mission. They had the pleasure of witnessing its continued improvement, and at the following conference we find Canterbury at the head of a circuit or independent station, with two preachers and 311 members. An encouraging addition was made to this number in the ensuing three years.

Other mission stations in the same county were extended, and new ones selected. In 1850 Deal and Dover were detached from Ramsgate mission and made a separate station, which reported ninety-four members to the conference of 1851. A neat chapel was afterwards erected at Deal, additional places were opened, and the mission continued to make some advancement. In March 1860 the foundation stone of a new chapel was laid at Charlton, in the suburbs of Dover, by J. Diggle, Esq., who gave £20 towards the erection.

Chatham mission was more prosperous. In 1850 it reported 135 members, and had one preacher, Mr. Jesse Ashworth, appointed to it. Under his prudent management and acceptable and zealous labours the station gradually improved, two additional missionaries were sent to assist him, and a number of fresh places were visited with more or less success, among which may be named Strood, Brompton, Halling, Rainham, Murston, and Milton. At the last mentioned place considerable difficulty was experienced in obtaining a place in which to worship. Mr. Golden who kindly allowed the missionaries to preach in his house, had, on that account, more than once to seek a fresh residence. At length they took on rent an old room over a kitchen, in which, notwithstanding its disadvantages and the persecutions the society had to endure, great good was effected, and many sinners were brought to the Lord. The open-air services of the missionaries in the most needy parts of Chatham, and their extensive visitation of the poorest families therein, were rendered of considerable service to the residents, and their preaching was blessed

to not a few of the military, who often listened with marked attention to their plain and earnest addresses. Mr. Ashworth had the satisfaction of leaving nearly 200 members on this mission, and the way partly prepared for the erection of a new chapel at Chatham, and another at Milton. Under the thoughtful and persevering efforts of Mr. Thomas Doody, his successor, a neat chapel was erected at each of these places, which tended to establish and enlarge the societies.

In 1853 we find Goudhurst and the adjacent places detached from Maidstone mission and formed into a separate station, with two preachers and 108 members. A number of new places were then visited, and more or less good effected thereat. Among these places may be named Cranbrook, Lamberhurst, Penbury, Peckham, Latterford, Yalding, Hunton, Hadlow, and Tunbridge Wells. Missionary services were commenced in the last-mentioned town by holding a camp-meeting on the beautiful common there, which meeting was supported by preachers and friends from places ten or twelve miles distant, and produced a good effect. From that time preaching was conducted there in the open-air whenever weather permitted, and large assemblies composed both of rich and poor—many of whom visited the place for the improvement of their health—listened with devout attention to the word of life, and many, it is hoped, found it to be beneficial to their spiritual health. Mr. Jesse Ashworth took the superintendency of this mission in 1854, and under his careful supervision and persevering labours, and those of his colleagues and the local preachers, the good work continued to advance. About three years after preaching was commenced at Tunbridge Wells a neat chapel was erected at the cost £500, towards which £200 were subscribed. An improving society and a promising Sabbath-school are connected with this sanctuary, and have the prospect of accomplishing considerable good in the vicinity. In other places on this mission station the progress of the cause was greatly impeded for want of suitable places of worship; but during the summer the mission-

aries persevered in proclaiming the good tidings of salvation in the open-air in every parish within its borders.

Besides Canterbury circuit there were the following mission stations at the conference of 1860, Sheerness, Ramsgate, Maidstone, Ashford, Gravesend, Chatham, Deal and Dover, Goudhurst, and Tunbridge Wells. On these stations sixteen missionaries are employed, zealously labouring to spread evangelical truth and Scriptural christianity through numerous towns and villages in this fine and fertile county, and happily realizing an encouraging amount of success.

In the neighbouring county of Sussex some progress was made. Brighton mission extended its borders, with the aid of an additional missionary, the members of society were nearly doubled, and the friends succeeded in erecting a new chapel in the town.

Hastings also was selected as a mission station in the spring of 1859. Mr. W. Freear commenced missionary operations there and in the neighbouring villages with a pleasing prospect of success. A large room, formerly the Mechanics' Institute, was taken on rent in the town, and opened for divine worship on Sunday, May 15th, 1859. The congregations were large, and the aspect of things was cheering. Mr. Bywater, the General Missionary Secretary, assisted on the occasion, and several ministers of the town attended a public meeting on the following evening, and expressed fraternal affection for the society and good wishes for its success. In July Mr. W. H. Walton was sent to assist Mr. Freear. Their labours were crowned with a measure of success. Three Sabbath-schools were formed, and a few small societies, numbering in all fifty-six members in March, 1860.

Additional efforts, too, were made in Surrey. A second missionary was employed on the Croydon mission, and a new chapel erected in the populous neighbourhood of Redhill. Another chapel was erected at Horley, and at the conference of 1860 three missionaries were appointed to the station.

Bagshot and the vicinity were likewise selected as a new mission station, Mr. Staley, of London, contributing liberally towards its

support. Some good was effected, and a society formed; and in the spring of 1859 an additional missionary was appointed to the station. During the ensuing year the station nearly doubled its small number of members.

Weymouth mission, in Dorsetshire, prospered greatly in the year 1857 and 1858. A new chapel was erected on the island of Portland, free from debt; the work of salvation spread rapidly among the people, and an increase of above 100 members was reported to the conference of 1858. Considerable advancement was also made during the two following years, and another chapel erected on the island of Portland.

Fresh missionary labours were also begun in Gloucestershire. Towards the close of the year 1854 a missionary was sent to the city of Gloucester to make another attempt to establish a cause therein. He succeeded in collecting a congregation and in forming a small society, which reported nineteen members to the conference of 1855. The mission was afterwards extended to the large town of Cheltenham, where a society was again formed. In 1858 a new chapel was erected in Gloucester, affording facilities for increased usefulness, and giving stability to the cause. A large chapel was afterwards purchased in Cheltenham. It is gratifying to find the ancient city of Gloucester and the large town of Cheltenham, formerly relinquished by the connexion, again occupied as a mission station, with the prospect of considerable success, and of securing a permanent establishment.

Going westward into the beautiful and extensive county of Devon, we find missionary operations re-commenced, and favoured with encouraging success. In 1853 Mr. Thomas Drew was appointed to open a mission in the city of Exeter and the neighbourhood. In the city the beginning was discouraging, but at Exmouth Mr. Drew was cheered with success, a large congregation was collected, a number of persons found salvation through faith in Christ, and a promising society was formed. The number of members reported for the mission to the conference of 1854 was forty-five; and as the prospect of usefulness was encouraging,

arrangements were then made for sending an additional missionary to the station. The following year the number increased to eighty-two. The progress of the station was not rapid for the next few years, but in 1859 a convenient chapel was taken in an eligible situation in Exeter, which gave an impetus to the cause. The best chapel in Exmouth was also secured for the society, and the mission prospered more than before. In 1859 we find the station divided into two, Exeter and Exmouth, and two preachers appointed to each, both of which made some advancement during the ensuing year.

Soon after the General Missionary Committee sent Mr. Drew to Exeter it sent Mr. D. Kent to Plymouth. He commenced his missionary labours in the summer of 1854 by preaching in the open-air in Plymouth and the neighbouring towns. When the weather would no longer permit of open-air services he took a room for religious worship, and during the winter the infant cause made some little progress, thirty members being reported to the conference of 1855. Mr. Thomas Drew then took charge of the mission, and during the year was assisted by Mr. E. C. Pritchard. Under their acceptable and zealous labours the work of the Lord progressed, sinners were converted in Plymouth, Devonport, and Morice Town, and the societies increased in number. The following year was not less successful, 140 members being reported to the conference of 1857. Towards the end of the year 1858 the foundation-stone of a new chapel was laid at Morice Town, and one purchased in Plymouth, and the mission continued to advance. The number of members reported to the conference of 1860 was 295.

During the summer of 1858 the General Missionary Committee sent Mr. W. Hayman to open a mission at South Molton, in the north of Devon. His labours at different places were rendered very successful in the conversion of sinners to God, and several societies were formed. Such were the openings for usefulness, and such the promise of success in this mission, that another missionary was sent to assist Mr. Hayman in the spring of 1859.

The mission improved during the following year, and a new chapel was began at South Molton under favourable auspices.

Teignmouth and Kingsbridge in the same county were opened as mission stations in August of the same year, and twenty-two members were reported for Teignmouth, and seventeen for Kingsbridge to the following conference; making in all, six mission stations in Devonshire, to which ten missionaries are appointed. The spirited and vigorous manner in which missionary operations have recently been conducted in this county is some amends for the relinquishment of this field of labour in former years.

In the east of Cornwall missionary operations were begun. Liskeard was made the head of the mission. Mr. G. Osborne laboured there with considerable success. The work continued to advance under his successors, and at the conference of 1860 there were three missionaries and 218 members belonging to this station.

Returning from the west of England, and glancing at the county of Essex, we find Chelmsford, the county town, selected as a missionary station. Mr. R. Monkman began his missionary labours in this town in the spring of 1854, and soon met with a measure of success, forty-one members being reported to the conference of 1855. In 1856 Mr. John Guy took charge of this mission, and, when assisted by another missionary, he greatly enlarged its borders. In 1858 three missionaries were appointed to this station, and a large extent of territory was brought under cultivation. The soil was not very productive, but it yielded some amount of fruit, and a fourth preacher was sent in 1859, and 256 members were reported to the conference of 1860.

During the year 1859 we find some progress made in St. Alban's mission, Hertfordshire. At Bushey a beautiful chapel was built for the connexion by C. Vines, Esq., at the cost of more than £400.

Coming to the Midland counties we find Northampton mission made into a separate circuit, and Peterborough and Ramsey mission greatly improved. Under the superintendency of Mr.

Jesse Ashworth great reductions were made in chapel debts, several new chapels were erected, several new societies were formed, and the mission rose into prosperity and strength.

The missionary stations in England, as a whole, made gradual, though not very rapid progress; but the last few years were more successful than preceding ones. Several new stations were selected, additional missionaries employed, and at the conference of 1860 the prospect of the missions was cheering.

In Scotland the number of stations and of missionaries increased during the period under consideration. In 1850 there were four stations,—Glasgow, Paisley, Edinburgh, and Calder Bank, and one preacher appointed to each, besides a mission at Alloa, under the care of Sunderland circuit. In 1860 there were the same stations as those just named, and Motherwell and Wishaw additional; and on these stations eight missionaries were employed, double the number to that in 1850. Some new chapels had also been erected, and encouraging additions made to the respective societies, though the Scottish stations remained feeble when compared with most of the stations in England.

In Ireland we have a little progress to record, especially of late years. Some additions were made to the societies, and the number of missionaries nearly doubled, having risen from five in 1850, to eight in 1860. From this recent addition to the staff of labourers a corresponding improvement in the missions generally may be reasonably expected.

We must now glance at the progress of the missions in Canada. In 1850 there were 9 stations, 17 missionaries, and 1,630 members. Some of these stations, however, were self-sustained and self-governed. In 1851 there were 12 stations, 19 missionaries, and 1,739 members. In 1852 there were 13 stations, and 20 preachers. In 1853 there were 15 stations, 23 preachers, and 2326 members. In 1854 the stations were reported in two districts, Toronto and Hamilton; the number of stations had risen to 19, the preachers to 37, the members to 2,671. In 1855 the stations were 25, the preachers 37, the members 2,902. In 1856

the stations were 28, the preachers 37, the members 3,039. The following year was almost stationary, the number of stations and preachers were about the same as in 1856, the members had risen to 3,090. The next succeeding year was one of prosperity, the members being reported at 3,399. The ensuing year was one of still greater prosperity, the increase of members being 439. The following statistics were reported to the conference of 1859:—Travelling preachers 35, local preachers 229, class-leaders 196, connexional chapels 82, rented chapels and other preaching places 169, Sabbath-schools 44, Sabbath-school scholars 2,392, teachers 410, members of society 3,838. In 1860 the number of principal stations was 32, missions and missionaries 40, and members of society 4274.

Many of the stations in Canada are self-sustained, others are still mission stations. The stations are divided into six districts; and an annual conference is held, composed of delegates from the respective districts, similar to the manner in which the British conference is composed. The Canadian conference stations the preachers in Canada, makes other needful regulations for carrying on the work of God by missionary labours, the erection of chapels, and the maintenance of schools; and devises various means likely to accomplish the good of the stations. A summary of its proceedings is laid before the British conference for examination, and confirmation, if approved. Recently no alteration has been made by the British conference in the stations of preachers by the Canadian conference, nor in any local matters of minor importance. The Canadian Missionary Committee has also of late mainly conducted the missionary operations in Canada, though under the supervision of the General Missionary Committee in England. A certain amount of missionary money has been voted by recent British conferences to assist the missionary operations in Canada; not always the same amount, but varying according to circumstances.

The progress of the Canadian mission has not been equal to the expectations of its early advocates, nor such as to satisfy many of

the leading friends in England. But when the difficulties with which it has had to struggle are clearly apprehended and duly considered, its advancement will be regarded with gratitude to Almighty God, who has watched over it in infancy and childhood, and is gradually conducting it to a state of maturity and vigour. During the last few years several acceptable brethren have gone from the ranks of the regular ministry in England to serve the rising cause in Canada, and have efficiently ministered to its aid. Could a number more, equally acceptable, be induced to follow their example, they would meet with spheres of usefulness in that rising colony in which their energies might be employed to great advantage, resulting in glory to God and the highest good to men. Whilst new missions in other colonies should not be neglected, it is hoped that the oldest colonial mission belonging to the denomination will not be overlooked or forgotten, but continue to be assisted according to its requirements and the ability of the community.

We are unable to furnish any certain account of the state of the Primitive Methodist societies in the Eastern States of America, but we have reason to believe that they continue to be few and feeble. The societies in the far west have been more prosperous, and continue to make steady and encouraging advancement.

The missions in Australia next claim our attention. Those in South Australia are the first according to the order of time. In 1850 there were only two stations, Adelaide and Mount Barker, and only one missionary on each. On the former station there were 143 members, on the latter ninety. In the following year the number of members had increased to 164 on the Adelaide mission, and to 128 on Mount Barker station; and Mr. W. Whitfield was sent as an additional missionary with the design of occupying Kooringa, or the Burra Burra mines, as a separate station. But soon after his arrival there the gold mines were discovered in Victoria, and the copper mines at the Burra were quickly deserted by nearly all the workmen, in the hopes of being enriched with the more precious metal found in the neighbouring

colony. A large portion of the agriculturists and tradesmen of Adelaide and the vicinity also flocked to the gold diggings in Victoria; and Mr. Wiltshire, the missionary at Adelaide, deemed it advisable to follow the portion of his flock who had gone in search of gold, so that the remainder were left like sheep without a shepherd. Under these circumstances the chapel at the Burra was closed, the place relinquished for a time, and Mr. Whitfield repaired to Adelaide to minister to the enfeebled societies. The intense excitement which the gold discovery produced was very prejudicial to the spiritual interests of the inhabitants, and for a time threw every thing into a state of confusion and disorder. In 1853 we find a great diminution in the number of members reported for Adelaide station; but in the then unsettled state of the colony and of the societies therein, it would be difficult, if not imposible, to furnish an accurate report. Mr. Wiltshire, for certain reasons, withdrew from the connexion, and the societies suffered for lack of adequate ministerial aid. In August, 1854, Messrs. Whittaker and Cole were dispatched to supply their necessities; they met with a kind reception; the societies were inspirited with new life and vigour, and soon recovered their former prosperity. In 1854, we find two preachers on the Adelaide station, two on Mount Barker station, Mr. J. G. Wright appointed to the Burra Burra mines, and one wanted for Salisbury. In the report sent to the conference of 1856, Adelaide station was said to contain 164 members, Mount Barker 149, Burra Burra mines 2, the two members being Mr. and Mrs. Wright, then newly arrived, It was a happy day for the Burra Burra when this devoted missionary and his excellent wife arrived there. The deserted sanctuary was speedily repaired and opened for divine worship; preaching was begun in the open-air, numbers flocked to hear the word of life; the earnestness, power and unction with which the zealous missionary proclaimed the soul-stirring truths of the gospel arrested the attention of all who came within the sound of his magnificent voice; the arrows of conviction pierced many a hardened heart, penitential emotions swelled many a guilty bosom,

earnest cries for mercy proceeded from lips more accustomed to swear than to pray, and not a few broken-hearted sinners were made whole by the application of the never-failing remedy of the Gospel. A flourishing society was soon raised up, who liberally contributed towards the support of their beloved minister, and united in pious efforts to promote their own and their neighbours' salvation. Mr. Wright, with true apostolic zeal, pushed forward into the country, taking long excursions in search of colonists settled far from the means of grace, and earnestly ministering to their necessities. In 1857 we find Kooringa, or Burra Burra mines, containing eighty-nine members of society, and made into a separate circuit, being self-governed and self-sustained. In 1858 the number was increased to 114, and two preachers were appointed to the station, which continued to progress.

Adelaide and Mount Barker stations also made considerable progress, and were reported as separate circuits, with two preachers each, to the conference of 1857; the former having 186 members, and the latter 165.

Salisbury mission, with one preacher, Mr. J. Standring, is found in the minutes of conference for 1858; but before the conference of 1859 it was made into a circuit, being able to meet its expenses and to manage its own affairs. Mr. Joseph Warner was sent to reinforce the missionaries in this colony in August, 1858, and Mr. T. Braithwaite in the spring of 1859. The report of the Adelaide district to the conference of this year, contained seven travelling preachers and one superannuated, 68 local preachers, 43 class-leaders, 35 chapels, 25 other preaching places, 27 Sabbath-schools, 888 scholars, 171 teachers, and 717 members of society; a proof of considerable advancement during the few foregoing years. In 1860 the number of principal stations was nine, regular ministers and missionaries nine, and members of society 791. Several additional missionaries were urgently demanded, to occupy the numerous promising openings which presented themselves.

Considerable improvement had taken place in chapel affairs. In

the city of Adelaide an eligible site, at the cost of £375, was procured for a large Jubilee chapel, and the foundation stone was laid March 12th, 1860, by S. Bakewell, Esq., M.P. S. F. Angas, Esq., contributed the handsome sum of £100, and other friends rendered liberal aid, affording satisfactory evidence that the new sanctuary would be placed in easy circumstances.

The missions in New South Wales were not quite so prosperous as those in South Australia. In 1850 there was but one station, with two missionaries, and only seventeen members; and no new station was selected for a few years afterwards. The mission was extensive, reaching from Sydney, the capital, to Morpeth, near a hundred miles to the north. In the minutes of conference for 1851 the station is called "Sydney and Morpeth," and the number of members is reported at fifty-eight. The following year it reported ninety-three members. In 1853 it reported 117. In December of this year Mr. John Sharpe sailed from Liverpool to reinforce the Sydney mission. He arrived there in the following spring, and his acceptable preaching, business talents, and diligence and zeal, proved of signal service to the station. In August following Mr. J. Langford sailed from London to assist Mr. Sharpe in the Sydney mission. In the minutes of conference for 1854 we find Messrs. Sharpe and Langford appointed to Sydney, and Mr. M. Moss to Morpeth, then a separate station. In 1855 Sydney reported ninety-eight members, and Morpeth sixty-four. Mr. Moss having resigned the itinerancy, through failing health, in April, 1855, Mr. W. Colley was sent to supply his place at Morpeth.

But there being an opening for a missionary at Goulbourn, about a hundred miles from Sydney, in a nearly opposite direction to Morpeth, the conference of 1856 appointed him to that station, and Morpeth was left for a time without a regular supply. A small society had been formed before Mr. Colley's arrival, partially under the care of Sydney mission. In 1857 sixteen members were reported for Goulbourn, and twenty in 1858. The progress of the mission was greatly impeded for want of a suitable place of



worship in the town; but in January, 1859, a neat connexional chapel was opened for Divine worship under favourable circumstances, and the friends were encouraged to hope for enlarged prosperity. An additional missionary was employed, and the number of members reported to the conference of 1860 was forty-four.

Morpeth mission obtained a supply as best it could, and before the conference of 1857 Newcastle part of it became a separate station. In the stations of preachers for this year we find Morpeth and Newcastle recognized as separate missions, but without a missionary appointed to either. During the ensuing year Mr. Henry Green, whose health had failed in New Zealand, landed in New South Wales on his way to England, as was supposed, but his health had so much improved during the voyage, and the necessities of Newcastle station were so pressing, that he was induced to supply there for a time, till proper arrangements could be made. The conference of 1858 appointed him to this station, and his labours were acceptable and useful. The number of members increased, and the mission otherwise improved, though difficulties were found connected with the chapel property on the station, probably occasioned through the lack of a regular missionary from the beginning. Morpeth also was at length supplied with a regular preacher, Mr. J. Causland having sailed from London for this distant station in November, 1858. The number of members reported to the conference of 1860 for Morpeth mission was seventy, and for Newcastle thirty-four.

Sydney mission, under the efficient superintendency of Mr. Sharpe, was more prosperous than the fore-named. The chapel in Crown-street, Woolloomooloo, Sydney, became too small for the congregation, and was considerably enlarged in the spring of 1855, at the cost of nearly £200, the whole amount of which was raised by subscriptions. A larger chapel was soon afterwards erected in Kent-street, near the centre of the city, about a mile from the former. The site cost £800, and the erection near £2,000 more. Towards this vast outlay Mr. J. Pennel nobly

contributed £150, Mr. W. Allen £120, Mr. M. Moss £110, Mr. S. S. Goold £80, Mr. Aspinall £55, D. Cooper, Esq., M.P., G. A. Lloyd, and J. Fairfax, Esqrs., £25 each; and other friends according to their ability. In all, above a thousand pounds were raised by voluntary subscriptions, and the commodious edifice was opened for Divine worship in January, 1856.

Glebe and Redfern, in the suburbs of Sydney, were also visited by the missionaries, and good was done thereat. They likewise preached in the open-air in Hyde-park, about half-way between Crown-street and Kent-street chapels, when the weather would permit, and were encouraged by the evidences of good which was effected. Among those who obtained benefit thereby was a man who had been transported to the country for fourteen years, during which time he had received no fewer than 975 lashes for his bad conduct! He had been proof against corporal punishment, but the melting truths of the gospel, accompanied by the Holy Spirit to his heart, made him weep like a child.

The labours of the missionaries were not confined to Sydney. Canterbury, about seven miles distant, and New-Town, near Botany Bay, shared in their labours, and a chapel was built at each. At Parramatta, the oldest town in the colony, fifteen miles from Sydney, a small society was formed, and another at Greendale, twenty-five miles further; but these places, on account of the distance, could not for a time be well supplied. In stating the progress of the mission for two years, Mr. Sharpe says, "In September, 1853, the number of members was seventy-two, and the income of the quarter £17 5s. 4d. In September, 1855, the present quarter, we have 128 members, and the income is £65 1s. 11½d. In addition to the regular quarter's income, we have raised in the two years more than £1,400 for chapels, &c. One of our Sydney classes, composed of twenty-three members, contributed this quarter the sum of £15 5s. 0d." The number of members reported for Sydney mission in 1856 was 134, and in the following year 154. In the minutes of conference for 1857, we find Sydney recognized as a separate circuit, or an independent

station. In 1858, 128 members were reported for the Sydney part, and 64 for Greendale branch, 192 in both. In April, 1859, Mr. C. Waters sailed from London to assist the operations of the station, money having been transmitted thence to bear his expenses. The number of members reported to the conference of this year for Sydney was 153, and 122 for Greendale branch, when Sydney was made the head of a district, and Greendale branch a circuit. Sydney circuit reported 165 members to the conference of 1860, and Camden and Greendale circuit 142, an increase for each.

During the year Mr. Robert Hartley had sailed from England for Sydney, and Mr. J. Addison for Goulbourne; and at the conference of this year Mr. W. J. Dean was appointed to Newcastle in place of Mr. H. Green, whose failing health required his return to England, and Mr. G. James to Morpeth. With this valuable addition to the staff of labourers, the improvement of the district, and the prosperity of the stations in the colony may be fully anticipated.

The missions in Victoria would furnish materials for a lengthy account, but a due regard to space will lead us to condense the accounts as much as practicable. In 1850 we find only one station, forty members in society, and one missionary, Mr. John Ride. In 1851, 100 members were reported; two stations were recognized, Melbourne and Geelong; Mr. G. Watts was appointed to the former, and Mr. J. Ride to the latter. Mr. G. Watts embarked at Deptford for the place of his destination in the beginning of August, 1851. On arriving at Melbourne he found the colony intensely excited through the gold discovery; large portions of the population were flocking to the diggings in search of wealth, and the former order of things was completely deranged. So many of the inhabitants of Geelong had left the place that it was deemed advisable for Mr. Ride not to remove thither. He therefore continued at Melbourne, and laboured in connection with Mr. Watts. In 1852, 127 members were reported for Melbourne and Geelong station, and both missionaries were re-appointed thereto. Some

dissensions unhappily arose in the Melbourne society between a few of the leading men, which impeded the progress of the mission, but a small increase of members was reported to the conference of 1853. At this conference Mr. Watts was appointed to Geelong as a separate station, and Mr. John Ride was superannuated, being unable any longer to perform the labours of a travelling preacher. The prudence of sending a person as a missionary to a colony in the southern hemisphere when above fifty-five years of age may well be questioned. Mr. Ride had laboured extensively and with extraordinary zeal and success on mission stations at home, and might perhaps have continued to labour here several years longer, where allowance would have been made for his declining strength, and some relief afforded in the regular work of the circuit; but the change of climate affected him at his time of life, and the once strong man was no longer equal to the onerous duties of a mission station in a rising, bustling colony, full of energy and of intense excitement. The Missionary Committee was happy to secure the acceptable services of Mr. M. Clarke for the important station of Melbourne, and he sailed for the land of gold in the beginning of August, 1853. On arriving at his station Mr. Clarke found himself placed in critical circumstances, but strove to render himself equal to the occasion, and the mission continued to progress. 186 members were reported for Melbourne station to the conference of 1854, and 26 for Geelong. At this conference Mr. D. Gates was appointed to assist Mr. Clarke on the Melbourne station, and Mr. Watts was re-appointed to Geelong. At the conference of 1853 there were 290 members in Melbourne station, and 62 in Geelong. At this conference it was determined to reinforce the mission in Victoria, by the appointment of additional missionaries. Sanction was given for the employment of Mr. W. Calvert at Castlemain, in the gold district, about eighty miles from Melbourne; and Mr. Gates was appointed to Ballarat, also in the neighbourhood of the gold diggings. Messrs. L. Dobinson and G. T. Hall sailed from London in July, 1855, and arrived at Melbourne November 28th. Mr. Hall remained there to assist Mr.

Clarke, but Mr. Dobinson soon removed to Castlemain, and thence to Bendigo, to occupy a new station among the diggers. The small society there gave him a hearty welcome, speedily erected a temporary residence for himself and wife, and soon had a chapel ready for use. Mr. Dobinson patiently sustained the hardships and privations of colonial life, laboured hard to build up the rising church, and to extend the gospel to other needy localities. His little flock liberally contributed towards his support, and zealously co-operated with him in his missionary efforts. Several new societies were in due time formed, and some chapels erected, nearly or entirely free from debt. Such was the success of this mission, and such the liberality of the people, that Bendigo was made into a separate circuit at the conference of 1857, with one married preacher, and forty members, who honourably met all his financial requirements. In 1858 the number had risen to seventy, and in 1859 to ninety-five, but in the following year there was some declension.

Mr. G. T. Hall laboured successfully at Melbourne till his removal to Castlemain, about the close of the year 1856. This latter station was also made a separate circuit at the conference of 1857, with one preacher and 125 members. Melbourne station, under the superintendency of Mr. Clarke, and Geelong, under the superintendency of Mr. Watts, were also recognized as separate circuits at the same conference.

The Victoria district was then constituted, including four circuits, four preachers, and 435 members, exclusive of Sydney circuit and of Ballarat, which remained under the care of the General Missionary Committee. In 1858 the district numbered four circuits, several mission stations in want of preachers, and 590 members, not including Ballarat, which contained ninety-seven members. In the ensuing year Mr. J. Buckle was sent to supply the place of Mr. Gates at Ballarat, who had resigned the itinerancy under the force of discouragement, but continued to assist the mission. The number of members reported for this station in 1859 was ninety-two, and in 1860 the number had risen to 116, when it was agreed

to send another missionary to assist in strengthening and extending the mission.

Mr. S. Bracewell also sailed for Melbourne circuit, and Mr. G. Guy for one of its mission stations, in the same year. The statistics of Melbourne district for 1859, including Sydney, and exclusive of Ballarat, were as follow:—8 travelling preachers, 135 local preachers, 66 class-leaders, 35 chapels, 31 other preaching places, 23 Sabbath-schools, 1,150 scholars, 109 teachers, and 965 members of society; an encouraging increase for the year. The following year was also one of some progress. Five circuits and five principal mission stations, besides Ballarat, were reported to the conference of 1860. On these circuits and stations eleven ministers and missionaries were employed, and several more were urgently demanded to meet the pressing wants of those who were anxious to profit by the ministry of the denomination. The number of members reported, exclusive of Sydney, transferred to the Sydney district, and including Ballarat, under the care of the English General Missionary Committee, was 874.

Considerable advancement was made in reducing chapel debts, and in erecting new chapels. We find the debt on Latrobe-street chapel, Melbourne, reduced to about £30. And at Brunswick, three miles distant, an excellent chapel was erected, under encouraging auspices.

Geelong circuit engaged in the erection of a chapel at Spring Hill, and held a very delightful anniversary at Woomaylook, when the Rev. Mr. Saline, clergyman of the Church of England, kindly assisted, and proposed the holding of a union prayer-meeting, and an arrangement was accordingly made to hold one weekly, one week in the chapel, and the next week in his church.

Kilmore mission began evangelistic labours at Pyalong, a government township, containing about forty families, nearly half of which were Roman Catholics. For six years previous the inhabitants had not heard more than six or seven sermons, and no religious service had ever been held there on the Sabbath. Vice and immorality of various kinds were the natural consequences of



this spiritual destitution. But the humble labours of the brethren were made a blessing to the people, and in the course of nine months a small chapel was erected for their accommodation, and placed nearly free from debt at the opening.

At Rochford, where no religious service had ever been held, the brethren began their missionary labours about the same time as at Pyalong, and with similar or equal success. In about the same time also they succeeded in erecting a small sanctuary, free from debt.

At Kilmore, too, the brethren undertook the erection of a substantial brick chapel.

At the conference of 1860 Mr. W. Colley was appointed to Brisbane, in the newly-formed colony, called Queensland, in honour of our gracious sovereign Queen Victoria. Urgent applications had repeatedly been made from friends resident there for a missionary to labour among them, and Mr. Colley had the honour of being the first missionary selected for the purpose, where, it was hoped, he would prove successful in establishing a flourishing cause.

On reviewing the missions in Australia generally, one of the influential brethren, Mr. M. Clarke, thus expresses himself. "Little, comparatively, is known in England respecting the work in Australia. We may, therefore, state that in ten years about 2,000 precious souls have been gathered into the church. This certainly will not bear comparison with the number of 7,842 gathered in England during the first ten years existence of the connexion. But our readers must consider that our circumstances are very different; missionaries in Australia have not had the population, means of transit, facilities for usefulness, and the support of such a band of pious praying labourers as was the case in England. Here we are in a foreign land, with its often debilitating climate, interminable forests, scattered and migratory population, partly indicated and half-formed roads, pursuing our work isolated, and frequently discouraged by the delirious excitement of gold-getting, the inordinate habits of speculation, enter-

prize, and extortion, drunkenness, the hydra-headed monster crime of this country, antagonistic to the spread of the gospel. Considering these things we have abundant cause to thank God and take courage.

Melbourne district meeting was held in January last, when legislation on the formation of an Australasian General Missionary Association, consisting of an executive committee, pledging the circuits to contribute one-third of the net proceeds of their missionary money to the general fund, to be appropriated in opening missions, and affording assistance to newly-formed stations, was unanimously approved. This legislation was considered so important, that the committee was desired to take action immediately, and the conference be desired to give its sanction to the committee's proceedings. In this there is no intention to invade the prerogative of conference, nor to usurp authority which does not properly belong to us, but simply a desire to conserve the interests of Christ and the connexion, by vigorously seeking the salvation of souls. Four missions are placed under the care of the committee. Goldborough is already supplied with a preacher raised in the colony. Amherst we have just supplied with another. Kilmore is being wrought by Melbourne circuit until a missionary arrives from England; and Kyneton the committee is arranging to provide for. On these missions there is every prospect of success. Other fields are also inviting our attention, and had we right men and sufficient means rapid progress would no doubt attend our labours."

These are words of truth and soberness, and it is hoped that the respective Australian colonies will receive that support from the denomination which their necessities require and its means will afford.

A brief notice of the mission stations in New Zealand will suffice. The stations and the number of missionaries continued the same during the ten years now under review, there being three stations and one missionary on each. Some additions were made to the societies, and some improvements effected in several re-

spects; and could the stations have been favoured with additional missionaries, so that distant settlers could have been supplied with the ministry of God's word, the increase would doubtless have been considerable. But the expense attendant on these stations, chiefly through the small number of inhabitants thereon, was so heavy, that the General Missionary Committee declined, though reluctantly, to send additional missionaries, except Mr. J. Smith to supply the place of Mr. H. Green, whose health had failed. The war which unhappily broke out recently militated much against the New Plymouth mission. The country chapels had to be closed, and several of the friends suffered materially in their temporal circumstances. Wellington mission, however, made some progress, and at the conference of 1860 it was agreed to send an additional missionary thither as early as convenient.

Tasmania, or Van Dieman's Land, was approved as a sphere of missionary labour by the conference of 1858. Some members from England having emigrated thither formed themselves into a society at Launceston, a town next in importance to the capital, and when but twelve in number they sent an urgent request to the General Missionary Committee for a missionary to be deputed to assist them as early as possible, accompanying their request with £60 towards the expenses of his outfit and passage. This little company held their first camp-meeting at Launceston, on the 28th of November, 1858. "The spot was well chosen," says a local paper, "it is an unoccupied space on the side of the Windmill Hill. Southward it is sheltered by the top of the hill, and to the north-east by a fence and grove of trees, which throws an umbrageous shade over the green sward. The view from the spot is a picturesque and noble one. In the distance, towards the north, the silver Tamar is visible for many miles, in all its graceful windings; and still further, from north to south, the eye is delighted with the varying outline of the chain of undulating hills running from southward to the far north on the West Tamar, and only partially broken by the romantic-looking gorge down which rushes the waters of the South Esk from the cataract to rejoin the North Esk

in the Tamar. In the foreground, and literally at the feet of the spectators, the great portion of the town of Launceston lies, spread out like a gigantic map, or rather presenting a bird's-eye view of the pretty town, so perfectly that each street, almost each house, is distinctly visible and well-defined. Such a spot, shaded as it was by trees from the brilliant but rather intense beams of the sun, shining forth from a pure blue Australian sky, formed a temple of worship immensely superior for exciting sincere devotional and grateful feelings towards the Creator of all, to any building ever built with human hands.

"The platform used on Sunday was a furniture van, which the proprietor (Mr. M'Donald) had kindly lent for the purpose, and on this were Messrs. Woodnough, Edgington, two or three other members, and the Rev. Mr. Lindsay.

"The service was conducted in a most orderly manner. It consisted of brief addresses, rather than sermons, from texts chosen by the speakers, and between each address a hymn was sung.

"Previous to Mr. Lindsay's address the speakers and members of the society moved—we can't say why—from the waggon to about thirty yards down the hill for prayer, and then returned to their several places on or around the waggon. There was nothing very remarkable in either Mr. Lindsay's address or those of the the other speakers, beyond the fact that all appeared truly sincere in their desire to expound the gospel, and show the eternal advantages to be gained by a strict observance of the plain and beautiful laws of the Creator as there laid down. Mr. Edgington mentioned that the first camp-meeting in England was held in 1807, on Mow Hill, he believed, in Cheshire; and he read an extract from a report to show how efficient such meetings had since proved as auxiliaries in spreading a knowledge of the gospel, and in bringing home to the Wesleyan and other churches thousands of members who probably might never have been reached by any other means. The Rev. Mr. Lindsay prefaced his address by saying that he understood from the members of the Primitive Methodists that they looked upon the use of camp-meetings only in the light of auxili-



aries, by means of which the truths of the gospel might be brought to bear upon many who never attended any place of worship regularly, and who could not in so scattered a community as this be reached so well by any other means."

The small society had risen to forty-seven members when the report for the conference of 1859 was prepared. On Saturday, February 19th, 1859, Mr. Joseph Langham sailed from London to occupy this station, and to spread the knowledge of Christ among the colonists of Tasmania. On his arrival in the country he commenced his evangelical labours with becoming earnestness and zeal, and a considerable share of success rewarded his persevering toil. During the year Mr. John Foggan arrived to assist him, and the work continued to progress. The number of members reported to the conference of 1860 was 116. At this conference another missionary, Mr. E. Pritchard, was appointed to reinforce the staff of labourers, on whose arrival it was intended to commence evangelical operations at Hobart Town, the capital of the island.

A few words about a mission to South Africa must close our notice of the colonial missions of the connexion. For several years numerous friends in Norwich district cherished an ardent desire for missionaries to be sent to that country. The subject was repeatedly discussed at the district meetings, and thence recommended to the consideration of succeeding conferences. But the majority of these assemblies always deemed the enterprise premature till the conference of 1858, when it was deemed expedient to sanction preparatory measures being taken with a view to establish a mission among the colonists of Port Natal. The following resolution was printed in the minutes of conference for this year; "That as soon as the friends of the Norwich district can raise £500 for a mission to South Africa, without interfering with the regular missionary money usually raised on the stations, the General Missionary Committee shall send a missionary thither. If the friends in the same district can raise £1,000 the committee shall be authorized to send two missionaries. The money raised

for this mission shall be paid into the hands of the General Missionary Treasurer, until the necessary sum be secured." In the ensuing year Yarmouth circuit, especially, entered spiritedly into the enterprise, and besides raising a greatly increased amount of missionary money for general purposes, contributed a handsome sum for the contemplated African mission. Some liberal subscriptions were obtained from the brethren in other circuits, and some encouraging progress was made towards raising the amount specified, though not equal to the sanguine expectations of the ardent friends of the enterprise. At the conference of 1860, however, this contemplated mission met with more general favour, and the following resolution was passed:—"That as there is a prospect of enlarging our mission-field, on the receipt of a portion of the Jubilee Fund for missionary objects, the General Missionary Committee is recommended to establish a mission at Port Natal as soon as suitable men can be obtained for the purpose." It was hoped that should the missionaries prove successful among the colonists their labours might, in due time, be extended to the natives.

The progress of the whole connexion, during the ten years to which this chapter refers, may be seen at one glance in the subjoined statistics.

STATISTICS OF THE CONNEXION

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1850 TO THAT OF 1860.

1850.—Travelling preachers 519, local preachers 8,524, class leaders 6,162, members 104,762, chapels 1,555, Sunday-school scholars 103,310, teachers 20,114.

1851.—Travelling preachers 551, local preachers 9,077, class leaders 6,490, members 108,781, chapels 1,662, Sunday-school scholars 112,568, teachers 21,442, deaths 1,402, increase of members 4,019.

1852.—Travelling preachers 560, local preachers 9,350, class leaders 6,632, members 109,984, chapels 1,723, Sunday-school

scholars 118,508, teachers 22,398, deaths 1,451, increase of members 1,203.

1853.—Travelling preachers 568, local preachers 9,594, class leaders 6,767, members 108,933, chapels 1,789, Sunday-school scholars 121,394, teachers 22,792, deaths 1,588, decrease of members 1,051.

1854.—Travelling preachers 583, local preachers 9,834, class leaders 6,825, members 107,913, chapels 1,857, Sunday-school scholars 123,341, teachers 22,934, deaths 1,580, decrease of members 1,020.

1855.—Travelling preachers 585, local preachers, 9,981, class leaders 6,832, members 105,858, chapels 1,912, Sunday-school scholars 126,680, teachers 23,352, deaths 1,636, decrease of members 2,055.

1856.—Travelling preachers 600, local preachers 10,096, class leaders 6,885. members 108,557, chapels 1,955, Sunday-school scholars 133,867, teachers 24,397, deaths 1,585, increase of members 2,699.

1857.—Travelling preachers 598, local preachers 10,205, class leaders 6,919, members 110,683, chapels 2,010, Sunday-school scholars 139,486, teachers 25,403, deaths 1,475, increase of members 2,126.

1858.—Travelling preachers 609, local preachers 10,533, class leaders 7,104, members 116,216, chapels 2,094, Sunday-school scholars 148,368, teachers 27,091, deaths 1,725, increase of members 5,533.

1859.—Travelling preachers 610, local preachers 10,838, class leaders 7,368, members 123,863, chapels 2,166, Sunday-school scholars 159,251, teachers 29,183, deaths 1,611, increase of members 7,644.

1860.—Travelling preachers 675, local preachers 11,384, class leaders 7,803, members 132,114, chapels 2,267, Sunday-school scholars 167,533, teachers 30,988, deaths 1,784, increase of members 8,251.

Number of deaths in the ten years ..	15,837
Increase of travelling preachers, ditto	156
Increase of local preachers	2,860
Increase of class leaders	1,641
Increase of chapels	712
Increase of Sabbath-school scholars ..	54,223
Increase of Sabbath-school teachers ..	10,874
Increase of members	27,352

It may be observed that, for three successive years, there was a small decrease of members. These were years of great agitation and disruption in the Wesleyan body, and all communities of Methodists sustained numerical losses. The manner in which the controversy was conducted was, in general, very inimical to the spirit of genuine christianity, and injuriously affected some portions of the Primitive Methodist community; though the leading men in the body, both ministers and laymen, resolved to occupy a neutral position, and exerted their influence to preserve the connexion from meddling in the strife, and to keep the great work of spreading pure religion through the land constantly before the people. And considering that the principal founders of the connexion had but recently departed to their rest, that the decrease of members did not equal the number of deaths, and that there was a steady advancement in every other department of the work, being a yearly increase of travelling and local preachers, class-leaders, scholars and teachers, chapels and Sunday-schools, it was cause of gratitude to Almighty God that the connexion maintained its ground so well as it did, and preserved its neutrality, notwithstanding the strong inducements it had to the contrary. When the trial was passed it recovered its former prosperity, and made yearly and increasing additions to its numbers.

The increase of 27,352 members, of 712 chapels, and of 54,223 Sunday-school scholars, in ten years, should be regarded with becoming gratitude to the Author of all good, and as an encouragement to more abundant efforts to promote the Divine glory in the salvation of souls.

A considerable portion of the increase in question took place in some of the large towns and populous districts of the country; a fact worthy of consideration by the leading persons in the denomination, as an apparent indication of the call of Divine providence to devote more attention to these centres of population.

The increase in chapel accommodation is not fully represented by the increased number of chapels. Many of the present chapels are only substitutes for former ones, and have not therefore made any addition to the number. But as most of these are considerably larger than the former ones, which had become too small, enlarged accommodation was made where no indications of it appear in the above statistics.

With the increase of chapels, congregations, societies, and Sabbath-schools there was unquestionably a proportionate advancement in the intelligence of the denomination. To meet the improved tastes and enlarged knowledge of the congregations a new hymn book was compiled for their use by Mr. John Flesher, of which many thousand copies were speedily circulated. That some dissatisfaction should have arisen with a change of the hymn book in the body was no more than what might have been expected, especially in the critical period in which the new hymn book was first issued. But that the new book was a vast improvement on the old one came to be generally admitted, though many estimable persons continued to maintain a preference for that to which they had been long accustomed.

That the regular ministry might improve with the spread of education and the advancing intelligence of the congregations, it was also arranged that candidates for the ministry, and those who were about to complete their probation, should undergo a proper examination at the meetings of the districts to which they belonged; a measure which has given great satisfaction, and been productive of considerable good.

The last year of the ten under review in this chapter was more prosperous than any in the decade. Every district made some ad-

vancement, and the Jubilee conference assembled under interesting and joyous circumstances. The place where it was held threw additional interest around it. It was convened at Tunstall, in the centre of the locality where the connexion originated; within five or six miles from Mow Hill, where the first English camp-meeting was held, within about the same distance of Standley, where the first class was formed, within three or four miles of Bemersley, where Messrs. Hugh and James Bourne resided for many years, and where they finished their earthly course, within a mile of Burslem, where Mr. Clowes was born, and at the place where he was converted, and where his extraordinary faith, piety, and zeal shone forth so conspicuously, and won the admiration and esteem of all classes of society; at Tunstall, where Steele, Nixon, and other holy men, walked with God, and left the savour of their apostolical piety behind them; at Tunstall, where the first chapel in the connexion was built, standing within sight of the delegates sitting in conference; at Tunstall, which became the head of the first circuit in the connexion, and in the Jubilee chapel there, enlarged and beautified during the Jubilee year. This memorable conference commenced its sittings on Wednesday morning, June 6th, 1860, being the forty-first annual assembly of the connexion. Upon the examination of the reports of the various stations, both at home and abroad, and the state of the connexional funds, and the announcement of their prosperity, and the large increase of members, a burst of gratitude and praise was called forth from most present, and some time was spent in earnest prayer for continued prosperity, as well as in fervent thanksgiving to Almighty God for the blessings so richly bestowed upon the community during the first fifty years of its existence, and in the year just past.

This jubilant feeling, however, was chastened by the solemn fact that during the year death had removed from the denomination no fewer than 1,784 members, among whom was six travelling preachers, and Mr. James Bourne, one of the principal founders of the connexion. The following appropriate resolution was



passed in honour of his memory:—"The conference is impressed with the fact that not one of the brethren who were life members of the conference, according to the provisions of the Deed Poll, has lived to see the conference of the Jubilee year of the connexion, although Mr. James Bourne was spared until the beginning of this year; and it feels constrained to acknowledge the obligations of the connexion to him for the great efforts he put forth in its behalf in the early part of its history. It further resolves that a respectful notice of him shall be published in the large magazine, and that Brothers Bateman and Pugh be requested to prepare it." A further notice of Mr. J. Bourne will be found at the conclusion of this chapter.

On Sunday, June 10th, the conference camp-meeting was held. The weather was unfavourable, but four preaching stands were provided, each of which was numerously attended. It was estimated that from eight to ten thousand persons were present in the afternoon. The heavy rain, however, induced numbers to seek shelter in the chapel and school-rooms, where effective services were held. In the evening lovefeasts were held, both in the chapel and in the three spacious school-rooms opposite, all of which were well filled, and upwards of fifty souls professed to find peace with God.

On Monday morning, June 11th, a jubilee sermon was preached by Mr. Thomas King, the oldest minister in active service, when a large and attentive audience was deeply interested and considerably excited.

In the evening of the same day a most interesting and jubilant meeting was held in the chapel. The place was crowded to excess, the various speakers had unusual liberty, and the cloud of the Divine presence overshadowed the vast assembly.

The business of the conference was unusually important, and was conducted in great harmony, and with considerable dispatch. Several important measures were adopted, and arrangements made to meet the educational and other requirements of the connexion. The stations were recommended to establish week-day schools

wherever practicable. Mr. W. Antliff was appointed to prepare a spelling-book for the use of Sabbath-schools especially, and Mr. J. Petty a catechism for the schools and the families in the connexion. A committee was also appointed to assist Mr. W. Harland in the compilation of a hymn-book for revival and other services. The conference of the preceding year had appointed Messrs. W. Garner, J. Bywater, J. Petty, and W. Antliff, to consolidate the rules of the body, and submit them for examination to the publishing committees of the respective districts, who were requested to furnish their remarks thereon to the General Committee for the conference. This onerous work had been accomplished, but some of the committees had recommended such numerous emendations to be made that the conference was unable to complete the business, and therefore committed the work to Messrs. W. Garner, J. Petty, and W. Antliff, with instructions to examine carefully the suggestions of the respective committees to adopt as many of them as might be prudent, and to prepare the rules for publication in a condensed form as early as convenient.

In concluding our notice of the proceedings of this conference we must glance at the arrangements made for celebrating the Jubilee of the connexion. At the preceding conference several regulations were made on the subject. March 11th, 1860, was set apart as a day for united and special thanksgiving to Almighty God, and prayer for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, when collections should be made in aid of the Jubilee Fund. An appropriate sermon or lecture was recommended to be delivered at every place, if possible, and one public platform meeting, at least, to be held in every station. A jubilee camp-meeting was also appointed for every station on the last Sabbath in May. A Jubilee Committee was chosen, the executive of which resided at Hull, H. Hodge, Esq., the general treasurer, and Mr. J. Bywater the general secretary. The district committees were appointed to assist in arranging for the public meetings. A district treasurer and secretary were appointed for each district; and each circuit was recommended to appoint a local treasurer and secretary.

The objects to which it was decided the Jubilee Fund should be applied were four:—The General Missionary Fund, the General Chapel Fund, a superior School for the children of preachers and of other friends, and the better education of approved candidates for the ministry, and of those already on probation. These religious services were generally held as appointed, and many of them were eminently refreshing and invigorating. Some spirited donations were likewise promised in different parts of the connexion. Nottingham district took the lead in securing promises of this character, most of the ministers setting a noble example of liberality. Hull district held a general meeting in furtherance of this design, in connection with the annual district meeting in May, 1860, when £900 were promised; Messrs. W. and H. Hodge promising two hundred guineas each for themselves and families. Sunderland district soon afterwards held a similar meeting, and obtained some very liberal promises. But the conference of 1860 feared that the connexion generally did not manifest the liberality on the occasion which might justly have been expected, and therefore recommended additional means to be employed, and some appropriate articles to be inserted in the denominational magazine. As to educational assistance to candidates for the ministry, it decided that under existing circumstances it was not desirable to establish a college or school for their benefit, but that a preferable plan would be to place them under the tuition of suitable ministerial brethren, who should direct their studies, and otherwise mature or improve their qualifications for the ministry.

It was also resolved that an attempt should be made to establish a superior school in a central part of the kingdom, and in a healthy locality, for the education of the children of our preachers and friends; and appointed a committee, of which Nottingham district committee was to be the executive, to make all needful inquiries on the subject, and prepare the business for the consideration of the following conference. Other minor regulations were made, designed to further the objects contemplated, and the

blessing of God was earnestly sought thereon. The results must be recorded elsewhere, the limits of this work being not to extend beyond the conference of the Jubilee year.

This important and harmonious conference terminated its sittings on Saturday morning, June 16th, 1860, and the delegates separated in great mutual affection and esteem.

But while the connexion was laudably seeking to promote the intellectual and religious benefit of its junior ministers, the providence of God was solemnly reminding it of the shortness and uncertainty of life, by removing from its midst its principal founders, and several of its leading ministers and influential friends.

We close this chapter with a brief notice of several of these distinguished brethren, both ministers and laymen. First among them we place Mr. Hugh Bourne. His early friend and companion, Mr. Clowes, was called to put off the harness and leave the field of conflict more than a year before him; but having inserted a brief notice of his piety and usefulness in a former part of this chapter, we shall not introduce him here, except so far as may assist to illustrate the character and usefulness of Mr. Bourne. Of the early life of Mr. Bourne, and of the part he took in the formation of the connexion, we need say nothing in this place, having narrated the chief circumstances thereof in the beginning of this work. In the preceding chapter we recorded his superannuation in 1842, and his subsequent visit to Canada and the United States of America. After his return thence Mr. Bourne took comparatively little part in the most important business of the connexion. This chiefly devolved upon junior and more active brethren, fully competent for the duties of their respective offices. The decline of Mr. Bourne's physical and mental powers, through the toil and labours of more than threescore years and ten, required relief from the solicitude and cares of former periods. He, however, retained unabated interest in the welfare of the connexion, and constantly regarded it with paternal affection. He took frequent excursions to different and distant stations,



and laboured both publicly and privately to promote their prosperity. As long as strength permitted he continued to prosecute the work of faith and labour of love to which his long life had been devoted; and when increasing infirmities confined him to his residence he patiently endured protracted sufferings, and calmly waited for his summons. His departure, though somewhat sudden, was dignified and happy. On the day on which he died he rose as usual, and appeared as well as for some time before. About four o'clock in the afternoon he reclined on the sofa, and fell asleep. On awaking he appeared to be conversing with some one, and beckoning for a nearer approach, cried, "Come! come!" Then exclaiming, "My old companions! old companions! my mother!" without a groan or sigh he quietly breathed his last. A fit termination of a long course of piety and usefulness. He died at Bemersley, near Tunstall, Staffordshire, October 11th, 1852, aged eighty years. On the following Sabbath he was interred in the burying-ground in connection with the Primitive Methodist chapel at Englesea Brook, in Cheshire, when several thousand persons testified their respect for his memory by joining the funeral procession, and uniting in the solemn services performed on the occasion. Mr. H. Leech delivered an address to a large assemblage in Tunstall market-place, and Messrs. S. Sanders and T. Russell took the chief part in the service at the grave. The impression which the event produced in the district was solemn and extensive. All classes shared in the respect borne to his memory for the services he had rendered to the cause of Christ. As a preacher Mr. Bourne had never been popular in the locality, except for his original and peculiar talent in preaching to children; but his laborious and self-denying efforts to do good, through a long series of years, had justly won for him the esteem of the wise and pious.

His own denomination owes him a great debt of gratitude for the sacrifices he made for its welfare, and the energetic and efficient manner in which he promoted its interests. He was not indifferent to the prosperity of other communities, in whose well-being he sincerely rejoiced; but believing that the Providence of

God had called him to labour among the community in whose formation he had taken so prominent a part, he consecrated all his powers both of body and mind to promote its weal. His life was bound up in its prosperity; his constant study, his unvaried aim was to minister to its usefulness; his toilsome and zealous labours were all intended to enhance its well-being. And it is difficult to calculate aright the amount of good which he accomplished by his caution, his forethought, his energy of purpose, and his determined perseverance. The regulations he successfully sought to carry into effect for the benefit of the community in some cases bore hardly upon the regular ministers, and it cannot be denied that a few of them presented an aspect of severity which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to justify; for instance, one which provided that if unpleasantness should arise in any society which should call for investigation, and a travelling preacher should be found faulty in the least, he should pay all the expenses attendant on the inquiry, though other parties might be far more blameable than he; an example of partial legislation which a later conference saw proper to abolish; but, notwithstanding imperfections of this character, which Mr. Bourne's measures occasionally displayed, his influence in the management of connexional affairs was on the whole salutary, and even eminently beneficial. For many years he was the leading spirit in the denomination, and took an active part in its most important transactions. In pulpit and platform efforts Mr. Clowes was incomparably superior to Mr. Bourne; in legislative or administrative ability he was immeasurably inferior. Both exerted a powerful and beneficial influence in the connexion, but it was in some respects different. Both commanded veneration and esteem by their years, their manly piety, their eminent usefulness, and their high position in the body; but Mr. Bourne's influence was exercised with more apparent authority and with occasional harshness and severity; Mr. Clowes' with more paternal kindness and with a winning sweetness of disposition and manner. Mr. Bourne sometimes erred on the side of severity, Mr. Clowes occasionally on the side of leniency. The

former had much of Luther in his temperament, the latter more of Melancthon. Their difference of views in certain cases, and the different course they pursued in some matters of discipline, unhappily caused a measure of estrangement between them for some years; and in moments of severe trial Mr. Bourne sometimes spoke of Mr. Clowes in unwarrantable terms, for which, on more than one occasion, he had the manliness and grace to express his deep regret, and in his calm moments he frequently spoke and wrote of his early friend in the highest strains of eulogy. In many respects, however, these distinguished men greatly resembled each other. Both were actuated by a pure and ardent desire to promote the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. Both were zealous in an extraordinary degree in their efforts to snatch perishing men as brands from the burning. Both looked for *present* effects, through the blessing of God on their labours. Both used great plainness of speech in their public addresses. Both enforced with uncommon clearness and power the doctrine of a *present salvation* through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Both were firm believers in the theology of Wesley, and great admirers of his character and labours. Both were mighty in prayer, and strong in faith. Both were eminently prudent in the management of societies and the erection of chapels. Both were men of strong determination and of fixedness of purpose. And well was it for the body of which they were the principal founders that both of them were permitted to live to a good old age, and to promote its well-being by their sanctified wisdom and growing piety.

Whether were the more useful we presume not to determine. Their talents and acquirements materially differed, and so did the sphere of their labours. Mr. Bourne had more strength of mind; Mr. Clowes more fire of imagination. The former had more learning; the latter had a richer command of language, and a more fluent utterance. Mr. Bourne took a much larger share in the management of the connexion than Mr. Clowes; the latter did incomparably more than he in active labours to extend its borders. While Mr. Bourne was efficiently serving the denomination as the

editor of its magazine, and as the ruling mind in its general committee and annual assemblies, Mr. Clowes was pursuing evangelical labours, or home missionary operations with apostolical ardour and success. Both excelled in their spheres of operation; both were eminently adapted to the work respectively alloted to them. Mr. Bourne could not have accomplished what Mr. Clowes effected; Mr. Clowes could not have performed what Mr. Bourne achieved. The connexion has abundant cause to "glorify God in" both of them, and to render him unfeigned thanks for the incalculable benefit derived from their judicious counsels, their extraordinary labours, their earnest prayers, and their fervent piety. They were holy and useful in their lives, and in their death they were not long divided. Their mortal remains do not indeed rest in the same sepulchre; but their immortal spirits have met in the regions of the blessed. They mingle, we doubt not, in the blood-washed throng before the throne of God, and unite in the loud hosannahs chanted to the Saviour's name. The friendship they formed on earth has been renewed and perfected in heaven, where they shine as stars of the first magnitude, high in honour and glory, through the grace of God and the mediation of Jesus Christ. May their surviving sons in the ministry emulate their zeal, imbibe their spirit, copy after their example, and realize their success in turning sinners to God, and in building up believers in their most holy faith.

Between the death of Mr. Clowes and that of M. Bourne, their mutual friend, Mr. J. G. Black, of Sunderland, finished his course, and entered into rest. He united with the Primitive Methodists soon after they commenced their missionary operations in the north of England, and by his talents and virtues soon rose to distinction in the society in Sunderland. He took an active part in the erection of a large chapel in Flag-lane, and by his intelligence and influence rendered eminent aid towards the accomplishment of the object. He was early appointed to be the leader of a class, the duties of which he discharged with efficiency for many years. But in a few efforts he made at public speaking, he was



so convinced of his unfitness for it, that he conscientiously gave up the attempt. In the business transactions of the church, he was more successful. He was a shrewd discerning man, and by his extensive information, and vigour of mind, rendered great service to the rising cause. He became a prominent member in various committees of management, was usually sent as a delegate from his circuit to the yearly meetings of the district, and was one of the eight laymen named in the connexional Deed Poll, enrolled in Chancery, as permanent members of conference. He liberally supported the various institutions of the connexion, and studied to promote its weal in every respect. But though warmly attached to the community to which he belonged, he cultivated fraternal affection towards all other sections of the christian church. He was a member of the Evangelical Alliance, and of numerous christian and benevolent associations in the town, and at stated times had the ministers of all dissenting denominations at his hospitable residence. He was a man of great enterprise in secular affairs, and succeeded in amassing a considerable fortune; but he assumed no pompous airs, made no parade of wealth, and steadily laboured to cultivate spirituality of mind and heavenly and devout affections. He was often afflicted, but lived to the age of sixty. He died in peace, September 9th, 1851, deeply lamented by a large circle of friends. About forty travelling preachers of his own community attended his funeral, and also the ministers of all other denominations in the town, except those of the established church. Mr. Black was not without infirmities, which he himself sincerely regretted, but his great and numerous excellencies truly entitled him to the high esteem in which he was held both in his own and in other communities, and his long and faithful services more than merit this brief record.

Mr. John Reynard of Leeds, next claims our attention. He united with the Primitive Methodists in the spring of 1820, and soon became a useful and distinguished member. Possessing promising talents, he was speedily called to exercise his gifts in public speaking, in which he proved to be more than ordinarily acceptable

and useful. He had a sound judgment, clear views of evangelical truth, a retentive memory, a ready command of language, a distinct utterance, and considerable power over an audience. His pulpit and platform efforts were highly estimated everywhere, and was frequently in requisition, both in his own circuit, and in numerous other stations. For thirty-four years he devoted his energies to the work of a local preacher, and reaped a large measure of success. He was an enlightened and ardent friend of the community of which he was an ornament, and took a large share in its most important transactions. He was not only a leading man in his own circuit, where his influence was great, and beneficially exerted, but was likewise raised to the highest offices of trust and responsibility which the connexion could confer upon a layman, being constituted a permanent member of conference, which he regularly attended, and at which he rendered valuable service. He pursued a sound course in matters of church business, and studied to promote the best interests of the connexion. For some time previous to his death it was evident to his friends that he was ripening for the garner of God. He became increasingly dead to the world, and more spiritual and heavenly in his temper and disposition. His removal to the celestial country was affectingly sudden. On Sunday, December 17th, 1854, he attended his preaching appointment at Kippax, near Leeds, and while engaged in prayer in the congregation, his voice began to fail, and the last words he was heard to utter, were, "Lord Jesus bless me! O God, come to my help!" A paralytic stroke deprived him of speech, and of the use of his right side. He lingered until the Wednesday following, when he expired without a lingering groan," aged fifty-four years. On December, 24th, 1854, "devout men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him." He died comparatively young; but he had been permitted to perform a large share of useful service in the church of Christ, and to the glory of his Saviour's name.

Mr. John Garner was widely known in the connexion, having been a leading minister for many years. He was early brought to



the Lord under the labours of the first missionaries, and when about nineteen years of age entered upon the arduous work of a travelling preacher, in which he endured many privations and sufferings. The brutal treatment he received at Sow, near Coventry, is recorded in a former portion of this volume. Despite of these sufferings he persevered in the work without wavering, and became distinguished for general usefulness. His preaching was clear, sound, and practical. Possessed of a magnificent voice, and his enunciation being deliberate and distinct, he frequently commanded the attention of several thousand persons at large camp-meetings, and those at the outskirts of a vast assemblage could distinctly hear every word he spoke. His manner was grave and solemn, his spirit earnest, his aim direct, and a considerable portion of holy influence usually attended his word. His abilities as a superintendent were of a superior order. He had considerable tact and skill in management, he looked well after all affairs connected with the work of God, and had the satisfaction of witnessing the improvement and progress of the numerous stations on which he laboured, and on several of them there were powerful and extensive revivals. When the connexional Deed Poll was enrolled in Chancery he was chosen one of the four ministers who were constituted permanent members of conference. This gave him the privilege of yearly sitting in the highest connexional court, and of regularly taking part in the most important transactions of the body; and his intimate acquaintance with its laws and usages, his sound understanding, and his frank and fearless statement of his views, gave him considerable influence with his brethren. Fidelity, however, compels us to state, that he did not always keep his constitutional tendency to humour and levity within due bounds, that he sometimes manifested undue warmth of temper and that he occasionally dealt too freely in irony and sarcasm; infirmities which more or less injured a devotional spirit, and prevented him from being so extensively useful as he otherwise would have been. It is cause of thankfulnes that in his later years, he materially improved; sorrows and afflictions were sanctified to his good; his



piety became more mellow, his spirit more serious and devout. His services as missionary secretary were acceptable and useful. After he was superannuated he laboured as much as his strength would allow, and continued to take a deep interest in the welfare of the connexion. His sufferings from asthma, brought on by the hardships and privations of former years, were frequently intense; but he endured them with christian fortitude and patience, and calmly waited his summons to depart. After a protracted affliction, he died in peace, February 12th, 1855, aged fifty-six years, within a day.

Mr. John Briggs, whose youthful days were spent in sin and folly, was brought to God under the labours of the first Primitive Methodist missionaries to Leicester. Being made a new creature in Christ, he brought forth fruits unto holiness, and a marvellous change was soon manifest in his conduct and circumstances. "From a drivelling penniless drunkard, christianity raised him to the position of a respectable tradesman, and led him in time to the acquisition of considerable property. From being an associate of the vile and the abominable, it elevated him to an honourable status in civil society, and to important offices in the church of God." For many years he was an efficient class-leader, an acceptable local preacher, a member of Nottingham district committee, and, in 1855 he was elected a permanent member of conference. He, however, was unable to attend the conference of 1856, through severe affliction, and on the 5th of August following, he finished his course, aged sixty-three years. Mr. Briggs possessed good natural abilities, was a useful local preacher, and an efficient speaker on the platform. His humour was, perhaps, excessive, but it was natural, and not forced. When pleading the cause of temperance, his low stature, his corpulence, and his large and ruddy face, in connection with his sudden strokes of wit and his humourous recitals, prevented, at times, the most serious from maintaining their wonted gravity. But Mr. Briggs had a kind and generous heart, a fervent love for the cause of God, and an ardent desire for the social and spiritual welfare of



his fellow-men. He strove to cultivate a devout spirit, and took a lively interest in the well-being of the community. He liberally contributed to its funds, and spent much time and labour to promote its prosperity. Besides taking long and wearisome journeys on the Sabbath, to proclaim the gospel of his Lord and Saviour, he also took many week-night appointments, and frequently attended other public meetings. In addition to the services which he rendered to his own circuit, he was always ready to assist the friends in other and distant stations, at their missionary meetings or other anniversary services. His last affliction preyed seriously upon his nervous system, causing great wanderings of thought, and producing deep mental depression. For a time he was harrassed with painful doubts and distressing fears; but he obtained the victory over them, and died full of confidence in God, in whose service he had been engaged for thirty-eight years.

Mr. Thomas Dawson was brought to God when about fifteen years of age, under the powerful ministry of Mr. Clowes, for whom he ever afterwards cherished great filial affection and esteem. He was soon afterwards called to exercise his gifts in delivering a word of exhortation in public. Proving highly acceptable and useful, he was often engaged in public speaking, and amidst much opposition laboured hard to extend the kingdom of Christ. In his eighteenth year, with the reluctant consent of his father, he entered the itinerancy, "leaving a good home to endure the trials and hardships of a Primitive Methodist preacher." For eighteen months he laboured zealously to spread the gospel through extensive districts, meeting with considerable success; but his health was unequal to the labour and privations of the itinerant work, and he was compelled to locate. He, however, continued to preach as much as his health and opportunities would allow; and "through good report and evil report he steadfastly adhered to the church of his choice," in spite of the numerous inducements offered to allure him elsewhere. He was justly held in high esteem by his brethren, and was made a member of the most important committees in the denomination. He was frequently chosen a district delegate to

the annual conference, and at the conference of 1856 he was elected a permanent member. In all deliberative assemblies he rendered good service. His intimate acquaintance with the rules and usages of the connexion, his high regard for its welfare, his clear and vigorous conceptions, his unbending integrity, his outspoken honesty, and his powerful reasoning, rendered him one of the most prominent and influential members of the conference. He was possessed of good strong sense, and frequently spoke in strong language; on some occasions, we think, he erred in the use of strong terms, his constitutional temperament inclining him to entertain too gloomy views and to dwell too much on the dark side of things. But his upright intentions could not reasonably be questioned, and his speeches were on the whole eminently beneficial. Notwithstanding the sternness, and even occasional dogmatism, apparent in the heat of debate, he was a man of a warm heart and of a kind disposition. His piety was of a vigorous and manly character, and became more mellow and attractive as he advanced in life. In his last illness he was graciously supported by the presence of his Saviour, and met the last enemy without dismay. A few hours before he died he shook hands with every member of his family, and tenderly bade them farewell, saying, "I shall not return to you, but *you must* come to me." He died in the fifty-second year of his age, and according to his desire was interred in the Northallerton cemetery, by his old and esteemed friend, Mr. W. Lister.

Mr. James Nixon, of Tunstall, speedily followed Mr. Dawson to the house appointed for all living. The part he took at the first camp-meeting held on Mow Hill, and the generous assistance he rendered towards the support of his friend, Mr. Clowes, when first employed as a travelling preacher, are recorded in a former part of this work, and need not be repeated here. As the infant community gradually rose in importance and strength he became one of its most active and useful members. He was a very efficient class-leader, and was justly and highly esteemed by the members under his charge. His views of the way of salvation were unusually clear



and vivid, his faith strong, and his prayers truly mighty. He sympathized deeply with the various members of his class, and wrestled in earnest agonizing prayers on their behalf. His counsels were rich in wisdom, and his exhortations scriptural and savoury. In public speaking he was less successful. His imagination was not lively, his views not comprehensive, his utterance not fluent and easy; but his word was frequently attended with uncommon power, and was calculated to quicken and invigorate the followers of Christ. In the business meetings of the society he took an influential part, and earnestly sought to promote its purity and usefulness. In the later years of his life he was the father of the society at Tunstall, and was mostly regarded with respect and veneration. For many years he was an active member of the General Committee, and to the utmost of his ability he supported those measures which appeared to him most conducive to the Divine glory, and the spiritual well-being of the community. After he was elected a permanent member of conference, he generally attended its annual assemblies, and conscientiously sought to serve the connexion by his counsels and his prayers. But his views were too contracted to render much assistance in many matters of importance. He had also a tendency to indulge too much in gloomy views of things, and frequently underrated the excellencies of christians less vigorous and manly than himself. He had a strong will, and was not easily dissuaded from adopting measures which he conceived to be right, even when he might not be able to answer the arguments adduced in opposition to his views. This sometimes occasioned the appearance of obstinacy in spirit and manner, and produced an unfavourable impression upon those who were but partially acquainted with his great excellencies, or who had cause for trial from his misconception of their motives and character. But James Nixon lived in intimate communion with God; he spent much time in secret prayer, exercised strong faith in the mediation of Jesus Christ, and drank largely at the fountain of holiness. In his last days he was increasingly devout and heavenly. He watched the approach

of death without dismay, and daily prepared for the coming of his Lord. The holy scriptures afforded him strong consolation. When read to him in his illness, he said, "They are marrow and fatness to my soul." On his dying bed, he said, "I have solid and constant peace, and rest in God, and often have gracious measures of comfort and consolation." He died on the 8th of April, 1857, aged seventy-two years. He had been appointed by the General Committee to assist at the Jubilee camp-meeting on Mow Hill, held in the following month, but the Great Head of the church removed him to the regions above, and he spent that day in the society of the blessed.

Robert Atkinson was brought to the Lord at the age of twenty-four, and entered upon the work of an itinerant preacher in the connexion on the 1st of May, 1820, then in the twenty-seventh year of his age. He laboured with acceptance and success, and was respected for his meek and gentle spirit, and his upright and consistent walk. His course was not like that of a mountain stream, loud and shallow; nor like that of a deep and mighty river, frequently overflowing its banks, and flooding the surrounding country; it resembled rather a peaceful brook, modestly gliding through lovely valleys or extensive plains, promoting fertility along its banks, and adding beauty to the landscape. He lacked imagination and mental opulence. His mind was more practical than speculative, he preferred the useful to the ornamental, "he prized fruit more than flowers. He studied men more than books." His manners were plain and homely, but inoffensive and agreeable. His conversation was seasoned with grace, and ministered to godly edifying. His religious experience was of a healthy and cheerful kind; and as he advanced in life, his matured piety was becoming the rank of a "father in Israel." In 1854, finding that the cares of the superintendency had become too oppressive for him, he gracefully sought a subordinate position, and henceforward devoted little of his attention to the management of church affairs, but almost exclusively to the spiritual interest of the societies. In 1856 he was appointed a permanent member of conference,



but was only present at one afterwards. Affliction prevented his attendance at the conference of 1858. His illness was long and painful, but no murmur escaped his lips, no distressing fears disturbed his repose, no harrassing doubts weakened his hopes. He patiently suffered the will of his heavenly Father, and reposed in Him an unshaken confidence. Calm and peaceful had been his christian course, and so was its termination. A few hours before he departed he said to his friends about his bed, "The angels are paying us a visit." Soon afterwards was his departing spirit carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. He died at Thirsk, Yorkshire, August 12th, 1859, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the thirty-ninth of his ministry.

Mr. John Day was brought to the Lord at twenty-one years of age, and entered the itinerancy among the Primitive Methodists in July, 1821. He was a man of sound judgment and respectable abilities, and travelled in many of the most important circuits with acceptance and success. During the last few years of his life his strength declined, and his health became feeble. At the conference of 1858 he was, however, appointed to undertake the responsible office of General Book Steward on the 1st of January, 1859, though many of his brethren doubted the wisdom of the appointment, on account of his advancing years and growing infirmities. Believing that he should be able to discharge the duties of the office, he entered upon it at the time appointed. But he was not long oppressed with its cares and responsibilities. He attended the district meeting of the London district, held at Luton, in the beginning of May, and occupied the chair in preparatory assemblies, and during the sessions on Saturday, May 7th. In the evening he delivered a sensible and useful address to some junior ministerial brethren, united in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, repaired to his lodgings a little after nine o'clock, and soon after twelve he expired! So suddenly did he finish his warfare, dying almost with his harness on, and going from the midst of conflict to receive the crown of his reward. The

shock was great among the delegates and the friends at Luton. Much sympathy was shown by christians of other communities, and liberal voluntary contributions were tendered towards the expenses of his funeral. He was interred in the cemetery at Luton on the following Tuesday, several of his senior brethren taking part in the solemn service. Mr. Day was highly and justly respected in the community of which he was an efficient minister. His integrity, consistency, and blameless reputation, secured for him the high esteem of his brethren in the ministry, and of the numerous societies among whom he laboured. He had attained the age of sixty-three years, and had nearly completed the thirty-eighth year of his regular ministry.

The last of the honoured brethren we have to name in this chapter is Mr. James Bourne. He was born in February, 1781, and was brought to God and united with the Methodist society towards the close of the year 1799, the same year in which his brother, Mr. Hugh Bourne, found peace through believing. In the early struggles of the Primitive Methodist connexion he bore an honourable part, laboured hard and extensively to promote its well-being, and contributed liberally towards its support. In the business meetings of the connexion he, for many years, rendered signal service. He was more calm and self-possessed than his brother, and exercised over him a mild and beneficial influence. He was often chairman in the annual conferences, and conducted the business to the general satisfaction of the brethren. In the decline of life, however, he unhappily experienced serious reverses in his temporal circumstances, and from that period he took no active part in the affairs of the connexion. But he continued to attend the means of grace when convenient, and was present at the Jubilee camp-meeting held on Mow Hill in May, 1857. He was then a feeble old man, and his appearance presented a striking contrast to that of his manly and commanding figure in the vigour of his days. For some years he received a small annuity from the connexional funds, as a testimony of the gratitude and



respect felt for his former services, and in order to provide for his comfort under the infirmities of age. He gradually declined in strength, but lingered till January, 1860, when he died at Bemersley, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. It is believed he departed in peace, in the faith and hope of the gospel. "Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?"

CHAPTER XX.

Doctrines and Discipline of the Connexion—Concluding Observations.

HAVING recorded the circumstances connected with the origin of the denomination, and narrated its progress to the conference of 1860, it may not be improper to insert here a brief summary of its doctrines, and to present an outline of its system of government, for the information of those who are not acquainted with the printed rules of the body. The following account of its doctrines is copied from the general minutes of conference, as consolidated in the year 1860:—"This connexion is composed of protestant christians, who hold the following doctrines:—The being of a God, including the Holy Trinity: the Deity of Jesus Christ; the innocence of our first parents when they came from the hands of their Creator; their subsequent fall, and that of their posterity; general redemption by Jesus Christ; repentance, including godly sorrow for sin, and corresponding reformation; the justification of the ungodly by faith, on their turning to God: the witness of the Spirit to our adoption into the family of God; sanctification by the Holy Spirit, producing inward and outward holiness; the resurrection of the dead; the general judgment, and eternal rewards and punishments." In the connexional Deed Poll enrolled in Chancery, this brief summary is illustrated by a reference to the doctrines taught by Mr. Wesley:—"The doctrines believed and taught by the Primitive Methodist connexion were and are that system of religious doctrines which was laid down and es-

tablished by John Wesley, and which doctrines the said John Wesley believed to be none other but the doctrines of the Church of England, as by law established; and which were set forth by him in certain notes of the New Testament, and in the first four volumes commonly called his sermons, and reputed to be written and published by him."

The constitution and government of the denomination will require a more lengthy notice.

The members "are divided into official and unofficial; and none are allowed to be official members who promulgate doctrines contrary to the fore-named; nor are unofficial members allowed to remain in the connexion when their heterodoxy is likely to injure the peace and welfare of a society."

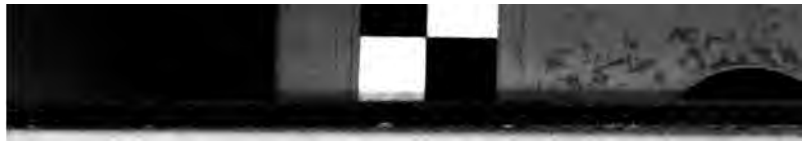
The members are formed into small companies called classes, which meet weekly for religious conference and devotional exercises. One member in each class is styled the leader, because he usually takes the *lead* of the meeting, and administers instruction, counsel, or reproof to the respective members, as their varying states may require. An assistant leader *assists* the principal leader in the discharge of his duties, occasionally conducting the meeting of the class, and administering counsel or advice to the members. The members of each class have their names enrolled in a class-paper or class-book, and each member holds a society-ticket, which is renewed quarterly, as a token of continued membership, when a visitation of the classes by a minister, or other office-bearer, takes place.

When a society has more than one class, the leaders, the society steward, who is frequently entrusted for a time with the contributions of the members, and a travelling preacher, or preachers, meet statedly to transact the society's business. These meetings are called "Leaders' Meetings," being chiefly composed of *leaders;* but none can be legally held without the presence of a minister or travelling preacher, extraordinary cases excepted. Persons earnestly desirous of fleeing from the wrath to come, or who are penitently seeking salvation, may be admitted to meet in class

on trial; but their earnest desires, penitential emotions, or proofs of sound conversion must be consistently manifested three months at least before they be received into full membership. "No person must remain a member of the connexion if he attends vain and worldly amusements, wastes his time at public houses, buys unaccustomed goods, is dishonest in his dealings, or is guilty of any other acts of immorality."

A number of societies united, form a circuit, which is of more or less extent, according to the number of the societies included, and the distance of the places at which the respective societies meet. These united societies share in the labours of the same preachers, and assist each other in the support of the ministry and the maintenance of different religious and benevolent institutions. A circuit has a meeting once a quarter, composed of leaders, stewards, and preachers, "and of such other persons as it chooses to admit." This is called "the quarterly meeting," and its duty is to transact the business of the respective societies within the circuit.

The preachers belonging to a circuit are usually of two classes, called travelling and local preachers. The "travelling preachers" are regular ministers, wholly devoted to ministerial and pastoral duties, and receive a moderate stipend for their support. They are called "travelling preachers" because they generally *travel* from place to place in a circuit, and at stated times, after a shorter or longer period of residence, remove from one circuit or station to another. The "local preachers" are so named because they reside in one *locality*, according to their own convenience or desire, and are not removed by the decisions of church meetings. They are "laymen," and when sent as delegates to district meetings or conferences are called "lay delegates," to distinguish them from the regular ministers, or "travelling preacher delegates." They usually follow some worldly callings for a maintenance, and preach on the Sabbath as opportunities permit, but receive no pecuniary remuneration for their services. They are chosen to their office by the representatives of the united societies to whom they minis-



ter, and should their preaching prove unacceptable to the people generally, their services are discontinued.

In the transaction of the business of the circuit's quarterly-meeting, travelling and local preachers are equal. A travelling preacher usually, but not always presides, but each preacher has an equal right to speak and vote.

Among the travelling preachers the leading minister is called "the superintendent," because he especially is required to *look over* the business of the circuit, and see that it be properly transacted. He is not a "bishop," in the ordinary sense of the term, but simply "the first among equals," much the same as a senior pastor in a congregational church. When there is only one preacher in a station he, too, is called a superintendent, he having the supervision of the different societies.

Between the circuit's quarterly meetings the general business is transacted by a committee, called the "circuit committee." This is composed of the travelling preachers, who are members of it by virtue of office, and of such local preachers, class leaders, or stewards, as are appointed by the preceding quarterly meeting to represent the respective societies. The committee generally meets once a month, and is responsible for its doings to the ensuing quarterly meeting.

When the places in a circuit become too numerous or important to be conveniently managed at one quarterly meeting, a number of the places are frequently formed into a "branch," which is a portion of the circuit, having its own office-bearers and regular meetings for business, but subordinate to the authorities of the home part of the circuit. So soon as branches are capable of supporting their own ministers, and of transacting the business of their respective societies, they are usually, but not always, formed into new circuits or independent stations.

Places visited through missionary labours, and united in one station, like places in a circuit or a branch, are called "a mission." A few of the missions are under the supervision of circuits, but most of them are under that of the General Missionary Committee.

Leaders' meetings are held on mission stations as early as convenient; as are also quarterly meetings and committee meetings. When a sufficient number of leading men are raised upon a mission to be entrusted with its management, and the station is able to support two or more travelling preachers, it is usually made into a circuit.

A certain number of circuits, branches, and mission stations, form "a district." In each district a meeting is held yearly, called "The District Meeting." This meeting is composed of one delegate from each circuit; the respective circuits sending a travelling preacher one year, and a layman the two following years, so as to secure, as nearly as practicable, two laymen to one travelling preacher. A member of the general or connexional committee, who is usually a senior or influential minister, called "The General Committee Delegate," who takes the lead in the transaction of the business, being held responsible to the conference for its performance according to rule. A delegate from the district committee, a minister, or layman, according to its option, is styled "The District Committee Delegate," and occupies a subordinate position to the general committee delegate. The district meeting receives the report of all the stations, including the number of its members, preachers, leaders, scholars and teachers, chapels and other preaching places; inquires into the state of each, and stations the travelling preachers within the district; subject, however, to appeals from the stations or preachers, and to alterations at conference.

The "Conference" is a yearly meeting of delegates from all the districts in the connexion, of twelve permanent members, and of four persons appointed at the preceding conference, in proportion of two laymen to one travelling preacher, or as nearly so as circumstances will permit. The delegates meet to *confer* with each other on all affairs connected with the body, to receive the reports of all the stations, to appoint the ministers or travelling preachers for the ensuing year, and to make such regulations for the welfare of the community, as may seem necessary, most of these having

been recommended by circuit quarterly meetings and by district meetings. The conference is the highest court in the connexion, from whose decisions there is no appeal.

A "General Committee," composed of ministers and laymen, usually in about equal numbers, is appointed to transact the most important business of the connexion between one conference and another. The executive has for some years resided in the metropolis for the sake of convenience, and has made an important part of the General Missionary Committee.

A "District Committee," occupying a subordinate position to the general committee, is appointed for each district, and adjudicates on certain cases submitted to its examination by the stations within the district.

From this brief description of the constitution of the connexion, or of its system of church government, it will be seen that it lies between the extreme of pure Independency on the one hand, and and that of diocesan Episcopacy on the other. It is substantially the Presbyterian system of government, but contains a much larger mixture of the lay element than is found in most Presbyterian denominations. From a certain gifted writer we learn that this circumstance causes "intelligent observers of the constitution and operations of the religious sects in Great Britain" to question "whether the Primitive Methodist connexion is adapted for perpetuity." As the object of this work is neither to glorify "our church principles," nor boast of our "liberal and beautiful system of church government," nor to praise our "wise economy," nor to attempt to solve problems which puzzle our wiser brethren, we shall content ourselves by stating, in reply to this writer, that whatever influence the liberal constitution of the connexion may exert on its future destiny, it has, in our judgment, materially contributed to its past success. That among thousands of lay office-bearers in the connexion, none has ever abused his power would be too much to assert. No office in the church, not even that of the sacred ministry, is an infallible preventive of the undue assumption of power, or of its improper

exercise. But, as far as our means of observation have extended, which have neither been few in number, nor on a very limited scale, the official laymen have mostly exercised their authority with prudence and moderation, and have thereby ministered in no small degree to the well-being and prosperity of the denomination.

We conceive, however, that it is not the liberal constitution of the denomination which has so largely contributed to its progress, as the abundance of its labours and the simplicity and zeal by which it has been characterized. The travelling preachers, as a body, have performed an amount of labour which would probably bear favourable comparison with that of any equal number of christian ministers in any age or country, the first ages of the church not excepted. The following account of twenty-one years' labours by Mr. William Garner may safely be regarded as a pretty fair specimen of the labours of his brethren in general. Writing from Brigg, in Lincolnshire, under date of January 8th, 1844, Mr. Garner says :—

"I was called out to travel by the quarterly meeting of Hull circuit, in December, 1822, and I entered on my new and important vocation on January 8th, 1823. From the day that I left my paternal roof for the work of the holy ministry to the present date, I have kept a diurnal record of my journeys and my regular pulpit labours. By the grace of God I have now completed three times seven years' service in the vineyard of Jesus Christ. In three months hence I shall be forty-two years of age. And after having reviewed 'my manner of life,' from the period of my accountability to God to the present day, I feel thankful to heaven that I can rationally come to the conclusion, that the time which I have spent in the gospel field has been far the happiest, and notwithstanding my imperfections, I doubt not, far the most useful portion of my existence. I *feel* that this is not a mean stimulus to be 'faithful unto death.' In the space of twenty-one years I have travelled on *foot*, with comparatively trifling exceptions, 44,936 miles, and have preached 6,278 sermons. The journeys do not include my



daily perambulations in the cities, towns, villages, &c., where my lot has been cast; nor do the sermons include exhortations, addresses, missionary speeches, &c., which amount to a great number. Some of my fellow-labourers, of equally long standing in the ministry with myself, have probably not travelled and preached so extensively as I have; but by others, in these respects, I have undoubtedly been exceeded. So that the extent of my preachings and travels may be regarded as a fair specimen of that of the first race of Primitive Methodist preachers in general. Frequently, after having walked twenty and (occasionally) thirty miles a day, I have been enabled to stand up and preach, or assist at a missionary meeting. Some of my old and esteemed companions in toil are able to confirm this statement. And to their honour be it recorded, I know that they have endured similar fatigues.

"On many days, of course, I have not travelled at all. And I gratefully acknowledge that many of my journeys have been agreeable, and recreative to both body and mind; but not a few of them have been extremely exhausting, especially in the early years of my ministry.

"It appears from my diary that forty-eight of my principal journeys, which were performed on foot, between January 8th, 1823, to July 27th, 1830, amount to 1,068 miles, which average rather more than twenty-two miles a day. And the reader must bear in mind that some of these journeys were performed beneath a scorching sun—some through depths of snow—some through windy storms and tempests—and some through drenching rains in the cold winter, while I was encumbered with an umbrella over my head, and a library and wardrobe on my back; though others were performed beneath a serene sky, and while I was surrounded with all the charms of a delightful spring. Nor should it be forgotten that preaching and travelling do not form the *whole* of the work of a Primitive Methodist preacher; in addition to these he has to 'give attention to reading,' to 'study to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,' especially to '*search* the Scriptures,' to use the pen extensively, and to 'visit from house to

house,' besides attending to those things which come upon him daily, the cares of the church.

"Under the arduous toils of the Primitive Methodist ministry many of our fellow labourers have fainted, and have either returned to their secular employments, or withdrawn from the connexion, and entered the ministry of other churches. Some of these, we hope, left us for conscience' sake; others, we fear, 'went out from us because they were not of us.' They sought an *easier life* and a *larger income* than the Primitive Methodist ministry could afford: verily these are enjoying their reward now. Others, regardless of invitations and lucrative proffers, have

'Nobly for their Master stood,'
Valiant 'champions for their God.'

These look for their reward HEREAFTER.

"If the preceding remarks be a means of cheering my young brethren in the ministry in the prosecution of their arduous, but blessed toil (which they may, at times, be tempted to regard as insupportable), and if they be in any measure instrumental in confirming the love of our lay brethren to a class of ministers who are not seeking *theirs* but *them*, they are not written in vain."

In reference to "visiting from house to house," to which Mr. Garner refers, it may be proper to state that each travelling preacher is expected to pray with thirty or forty families a week, at least, on an average, for the year round; and that we have reason to believe, from an extensive examination of official documents for a number of years, that though a few of the preachers have not equalled the amount, through lack of health and strength, or the pressure of church affairs, a greater number have considerably exceeded it, and the majority have not fallen short of it. Evangelical and pastoral labours so abundant, performed with energy and zeal, and accompanied by the blessing of God, will account in part for the multitude of souls which have been brought to the Lord, and united to the denomination.

But no inconsiderable amount of the success which the con-



nexion has realized is to be attributed, under God, to the zealous and laborious efforts of a large body of local preachers. Among this class of labourers there is a great diversity of talents; some of them are men of superior intelligence, extraordinary gifts, and of great acceptability; others, of course, are less distinguished; and some, as might be expected, have but slender abilities for public speaking. The amount of labour they perform differs according to their age and strength, the localities in which they reside, or the requirements of the respective stations to which they belong; in most established circuits in thickly populated portions of the country their labours are not usually oppressive, but in agricultural districts and in feeble stations they have frequently to go long and toilsome journeys, which are calculated to test their zeal and to exhaust their strength. In the early period of the connexion's history the labours of these unpaid and devoted brethren were conducted on a scale almost incredible, and eminently contributed to the extension and establishment of the rising community.

The class-leaders, prayer-leaders, and considerable numbers of other church members, have also emulated the zeal and activity of the travelling and local preachers, and endeavoured in various ways to awaken careless sinners from their slumbers, and guide inquiring minds to the Saviour. The community has happily presented the spectacle of *a working ministry* and *a working church* in harmonious combination. It has been mindful of the apostolical admonition, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." It has usually left the wealthy and the polished classes of society to the care of older denominations, while it has sought the enlightenment and elevation of the poor, the neglected, and the down-trodden. Its labours have often been regarded with contempt, even by many of the followers of Christ, and sometimes have been bitterly opposed by those whose benefit they were designed to promote; but God has smiled upon its well-meant efforts, and crowned them with his signal blessing. If its ministry has not been distinguished by learning and refinement, it has uniformly

given prominence to the leading truths of the gospel, and has been characterized by plainness, earnestness, pathos, and power, and has been honoured with a large share of success in the conversion of sinners.

Simplicity, earnestness, and zeal, have distinguished the denomination, and equipped it for some kinds of labour, which, though repulsive to some persons of calm and retiring habits, are nevertheless adapted to the wants of the multitude, and have been productive of most important and heart-cheering results. The main secrets of the success of the denomination are, under God, its extensive and persevering labours, and its spirit of earnest piety, ardent zeal, and glowing charity. It is humiliating and saddening to reflect that it has occasionally declined in piety and zeal,—such declension having injuriously affected its prosperity and usefulness. Had the zeal of the community never abated, and had all its preachers and members always laboured to the utmost of their ability for the glory of God and the salvation of sinners, how many thousands more would have been brought to Christ through their instrumentality. The reflection should produce deep humility and contrition, and lead to greater watchfulness in future, and to increased ardour and devotion.

In the former edition of this work we observed—

"The year 1860 will be the Jubilee of the connexion, the Standley society having been formed in the Spring of 1810, and Mr. Clowes having taken charge of a separate class in the autumn of the same year. It is intended to celebrate the event by suitable religious services in all the stations, and by liberal contributions to the various institutions of the denomination. It is not for us to dictate as to the manner in which these services should be held, nor as to the amount which should be contributed in aid of the institutions in question. But we may be allowed to express a hope that, while proper mention may be made of the labours, sufferings, and success of the connexion, there will be no vain-glorious boasting, no reflections on less prosperous communities, no ministering to denominational pride and vanity. It is in the highest degree

desirable that the services should be rendered eminently spiritual and devout, and thereby contribute to increased activity and zeal, and enlarged success." And we believe many of the services hitherto held have been of the character just named, and have tended to fan the flame of christian zeal, and excite to increased activity and nobler enterprise. Wide are the fields of usefulness open before the denomination, and solemn its responsibilities to the Great Head of the Church for their proper cultivation, and it is to be hoped that these extensive fields will be duly cultivated, and be productive of abundant fruit. The connexion is not yet prepared for extensive missionary efforts among strictly heathen nations, though a beginning may ere long be prudently attempted. It is cause of gratitude that older and wealthier communities are largely employed in this blessed work, and we earnestly wish them success in the name of our common Lord. But if missionary operations among the heathen cannot yet be undertaken on any *large* scale, many agricultural districts in our own country, hundreds of thousands of persons in our cities and large towns, and the increasing population of the British colonies in different parts of the world, require additional efforts for their enlightenment and conversion, and are accessible to the missionaries of the Primitive Methodist denomination, and may be visited at comparatively little expense.

The Congregational Home Missionary Society, according to its report for 1859, has resolved to withdraw several of its agents from villages and thinly-inhabited districts, and devote more labour to cities and towns. This may be a prudent arrangement for that society, but certainly the Primitive Methodists cannot innocently withdraw any of their labours from villages and agricultural districts, leaving them entirely, as they would, in many instances to the superstitious errors of Puseyism, or to semi-heathen ignorance, and frightful forms of wickedness and vice. The itinerant system, and the extensive employment of lay-agency in their denomination afford facilities for the maintenance and spread of the gospel in such localities, which are not found in the Congregational polity;

and these facilities should be diligently improved, for the diffusion of the truth through every needy district of the land.

And what a field of useful labour do many of our cities and large towns present. The rapid increase of their population, the multitudes who habitually neglect public worship, the awful desecration of the Lord's-day, the terrible amount of intemperance, licentiousness, and other forms of vice, which alarmingly prevail, call loudly for greatly increased efforts to arrest the progress of these fearful evils, to stem the tide of ungodliness which threatens to overflow the surrounding country, and to spread evangelical truth and piety among these dense crowds of our fellow-men, deeply sunk in depravity and misery. Speaking of cities and large towns, Albert Barnes eloquently says, "Beautiful as they often are, rich, splendid, magnificent, the seat of science, and the nurse of the arts—I add, too, with thankfulness to God, the home often of deep piety and rich and liberal-hearted benevolence—yet they are the home also of every kind of infamy, of all that is false and hollow, and of all that fascinates, allures, and corrupts the hearts of men. There are found men of all nations, colours, characters, opinions. There men of splendid talents live to corrupt by their example and their influence; there unbounded wealth is lavished to amuse, betray, and ruin the soul; there are the vortices of business and pleasure that engulph all; and there are the most degraded and the worst forms of human depravity." "I might go over the whole catalogue of crimes that are marked on the calendar of human guilt, and we should find them all concentrated, organized, consolidated in our cities and large towns. There foul and offensive exhalations rise from the receptacles of human depravity; there volumes of curses roll up towards heaven; there the seducer practices his arts to inveigle the young; there tens of thousands riot in intemperance, and curse their Maker; there multitudes practice all acts of fraud and infamy; and there Satan, knowing the power of cities in all the surrounding regions, has established his strongholds, and fortifies and guards his possessions with all that skill and art can do."



The zealous efforts made by different sections of the christian church to spread the leaven of christian truth and piety among the most degraded inhabitants in many of our largest towns, and in the mighty metropolis, are worthy of commendation, and should excite our thankfulness to the Author of all good. But it is mournful to think that these praiseworthy efforts, in many cases, fall far short of the rapid increase of population. Does not the providence of God loudly call upon the Primitive Methodist connexion to assist largely in this godly enterprise, to do much more for the enlightenment and evangelization of these centres of population than it has ever yet done? Of late years, indeed, its success in several large towns has been greater than formerly. But yet in many of them its societies are few and feeble, its Sabbath-schools far from numerous, its chapels small and uninviting, compared with the amount of population. Look at London, Portsmouth, Bristol, Plymouth, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and several other large towns and cities. How little has the connexion done for them compared with their pressing wants and its powerful resources. The time has surely come when more enlarged and vigorous efforts should be employed for the spread of vital religion among the ignorant, the wretched, and degraded portions of these cities and towns. Cannot the ecclesiastical system of the community be made to work with as much efficiency there as in smaller towns and villages? Something worth naming has been effected in Leicester and Nottingham, Sheffield and Hull, Yarmouth and Sunderland; and could not as much be accomplished in other towns? The honour of God, the glory of our Saviour, the salvation of immortal souls exposed to the imminent peril of endless perdition, the credit of the community, and the well-being of our beloved country, require more comprehensive, systematic, and persevering efforts, to spread the vital truths of the Gospel throughout the cities and towns in the kingdom, and to raise up flourishing churches where none at present exist, than have ever yet been

employed by the denomination. Happy will it be for the community if it shall faithfully discharge its duty in this respect.

And then in the colonies of our empire what extensive spheres of usefulness present themselves. Never, in the history of the world, had any empire such colonies for number, importance, and extent, as those of Great Britain. Her energetic sons are carrying her language, her commerce, her laws, her literature, her institutions, into all quarters of the globe. Ponder the progress of Canada during the last few years. Look at the rich and fertile colonies of Australia, and their rapidly increasing population, where villages, towns, and cities are rising up as by magic, and new states, or germs of future kingdoms, are starting into being with all, or more than all, the life and energy of the mother country. Yet how pressing their spiritual necessities. How perilous the condition of the settlers, unless the gospel be carried along with them as they spread from place to place. Without this, fast will they verge towards practical heathenism; and instead of being centres of light and holy influence amidst the surrounding darkness of heathendom, they will prove a dishonour to the christian name, and a curse instead of a blessing. But let the rising colonies of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, be filled with gospel light, and thoroughly imbued with vital religion, and a mighty advancement will be made in the cause of truth, and vast means be created for the diffusion of christianity in the most populous parts of the heathen world,—India, China, and Japan. The Primitive Methodist missionaries have done a little towards the spread of the gospel in these respective colonies. But what calls are there for vastly augmented efforts. What encouragements to send a large number of missionaries to follow the settlers into distant districts, and to establish the means of grace where God is not yet publicly worshipped, and where the gospel is not yet proclaimed. What fearful responsibility will the community incur should it not avail itself of these promising openings for the spread of evangelical truth,—should it not hearken to the calls of Provi-



dence to extend, according to its ability, the kingdom of Christ in these extensive and flourishing colonies!

The connexion has reached the fiftieth year of its existence. God has been graciously pleased to bless it with signal tokens of his favour, and to crown its humble labours with abundant success. Past mercies should stimulate and encourage both its ministers and people to labour in faith for enlarged success in the future. They should strive more than ever to diffuse evangelical truth and scriptural holiness, both through the needy districts of our own country, and in distant lands. Our means of usefulness have vastly increased since the early days of the connexion, and even during the last few years. The great additions made to the number of our ministers, office-bearers, and members of society; the multiplication of our chapels and schools, and the progress of education among the junior portion of our people; the accumulation of wealth among one part of our friends, and the greatly improved circumstances of others; the more favourable light in which the denomination is regarded by the public in general, and the declining opposition to our peculiar mode of operations, afford facilities and a power of doing good superior to those enjoyed in any former period of our history. May these facilities be diligently employed, and their power be rightly exercised, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit for the conversion and salvation of multitudes of precious souls.

No truth was more deeply impressed upon the minds of the fathers and founders of the denomination than this, that it is not by human power or might that spiritual good can be effected, but by the Spirit of the living God. Earnestly did they pray for His gracious and powerful aid in all their efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ, and to save immortal souls from sin and hell. Strong was their faith in the promises relating to the gift and assistance of the Holy Spirit,—strong their confidence that through the mediation of Jesus Christ these promises would be fulfilled in answer to their fervent supplications. Let the same spirit of fervent prayer and of powerful faith continue to characterize their

sons in the gospel, and the societies in general, and they will still be favoured with "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," and the prosperity of his blessed work among them. Showers of blessings will descend upon their Zion; she will strengthen her stakes, and greatly enlarge her borders, and her converts will be multiplied; and thus will the denomination, by the Divine blessing, nobly assist in extending Messiah's peaceful empire, and in hastening the happy period when "the kindgdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ." That glorious period is predicted, and will assuredly come to pass. "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen."



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